Abstract
At the time of influenza A (H1N1) emergency, the WHO responded with remarkable speed by releasing guidelines and a protocol for a real-time RT-PCR assay (rRT-PCR). The aim of the present study was to evaluate the performance of the “Real Time Ready Influenza A/H1N1 Detection Set” (June 2009)-Roche kit in comparison to the CDC reference rRT-PCR protocol. The overall sensitivity of the Roche assay for detection of the Inf A gene in the presence or absence of the H1 gene was 74.5 %. The sensitivity for detecting samples that were only positive for the Inf A gene (absence of the H1 gene) was 53.3 % whereas the sensitivity for H1N1-positive samples (presence of the Inf A gene and any other swine gene) was 76.4 %. The specificity of the assay was 97.1 %. A new version of the kit (November 2009) is now available, and a recent evaluation of its performance showed good sensitivity to detect pandemic H1N1 compared to other molecular assays.

Keywords
Pandemic, PCR, Influenza