

ADVANCES IN BIOTECHNOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Volume 4

Editors

Avshalom Mizrahi

Antonius L. van Wezel

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Preface

The primary focus of this, the fourth volume in the series **Advances in Biotechnological Processes** is on specific techniques and methodologies employed in the creation, conversion, and application of a diverse array of organic and genetic substances. Among the agents described are human interferons, carcinoembryonic antigen, plant cell suspensions, blood proteins, and sulfate wastes.

The early chapters provide a comprehensive analysis of the isolation, purification, and production of human interferons derived from lymphoblastoid cells. A later chapter, co-authored by the discoverer of eletrofusion, examines the interdisciplinary importance of this new cell hybridization technique, particularly with regard to its interest for physicists.

Carcinoembryonic antigen, a complex immunoreactive glycoprotein, has wide-ranging applications in the detection of various cancers. The production, characterization, and clinical applications of this substance are described comprehensively in the fifth chapter.

The final four chapters in this volume analyze diverse agents derived from human blood, plant cell suspensions, and microbes. One of the problems in biohydrometallurgical processes involves recycling of industrial sulfate wastes. A chapter in this book examines chemical processes for conversion of sulfates to gypsum, and for recycling of wastes by applying sulfate-reducing and sulfur-producing bacteria.

Other interesting subjects, including production of flocculating agents from microbes, methods for improving the levels of products synthesized by plant cells, and fractionation of blood proteins, are also comprehensively reviewed in this volume, further enhancing its interdisciplinary appeal.

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xiv ◇ Contributors

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Contents

Contributors	xiii
-------------------------------	------

Preface

<i>Avshalom Mizrahi and Antonius L. van Wezel</i>	xv
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Genetic Engineering of Human Interferons From Lymphoblastoid Cells: I. Cloning of Interferon Species Expressed in Sendai-Induced Namalva Cells

Sara Cohen, Baruch Velan, and Avigdor Shafferman

I. Introduction	2
A. The Human IFN- α Family	2
B. Heterogeneity of IFN Species Activated in Different Cells by Various Inducers	6
II. Methods	7
A. Construction of a Namalva cDNA Library	7
1. Preparation of RNA Enriched for IFN-mRNA	7
2. Synthesis of Double-Stranded cDNA	7
3. Cloning of ds-cDNA Into pBR322	8
B. In Situ Hybridization	8
1. Hybridization With 32 P-labeled Oligonucleotides	8
2. Hybridization With 32 P-labeled DNA Fragments	9
C. Labeling of Nucleic Acids	9
D. Preparation of Plasmid DNA	9
E. Restriction Endonuclease Analysis	9
F. Nucleotide Sequence Determination	10
G. Synthesis of Oligonucleotide Probes	10
H. Assay of Interferon	10
1. Determination of IFN Activity in <i>Escherichia coli</i>	10
III. Expression of IFN-mRNA Species in Sendai-Induced Namalva Cells	10
A. Screening of a Namalva cDNA Library With IFN- α and IFN- β Specific Oligonucleotide Probes	10
1. Isolation of IFN- β cDNA Clones	11
2. Isolation of IFN- α cDNA Clones	11
3. Characterization of the Various IFN- α cDNA Clones by Restriction Enzyme Analysis	12

B. Nucleotide Sequence Analysis of a Novel IFN- α cDNA	13
C. IFN- α 1 Is an Active Gene in Namalva Cells	15
IV. Discussion	16
V. References	19

Genetic Engineering of Human Interferons From Lymphoblastoid Cells: II. Construction of *trp* Expression Plasmids and Their Use for Efficient Expression of IFN- α 1

Avigdor Shafferman, Sara Cohen, Haim Grosfeld, Moshe Leitner, and Baruch Velan

I. Introduction	26
A. Natural Synthesis of Human α -Interferons—Limitations	26
B. Basic Features of Gene Expression in Bacteria	27
C. Production of Human Interferon- α in Bacteria	30
II. Construction of <i>trp</i> Attenuator-Deleted Expression Vehicles	32
A. <i>trp</i> Transcription Fusion Vector—pHG5	33
B. <i>trp</i> Constitutive Transcription Fusion Vectors	33
C. <i>trp</i> Transcription/Translation Fusion Vectors	36
III. Construction of Plasmids Expressing IFN- α 1 and Its Derivatives in Bacteria	37
A. A Plasmid Coding for <i>trpL</i> -IFN- α 1 Fused Polypeptide—pJ1-1	37
B. A Plasmid Coding for a Modified met-IFN- α 1 With a Single Cysteine Bridge—pJ1-2	39
C. A Plasmid Carrying a Transcription Termination Signal Downstream From the IFN- α 1 Coding Sequences—pJ1-21	42
D. Construction of Plasmids Coding for met-Mature-IFN- α 1 Polypeptide	44
1. A Plasmid Carrying a Mutated <i>trpL</i> Translation Initiation Signal—pJ1-4	44
2. A Plasmid Carrying a Bacterial Consensus Translation Initiation Signal—pJ1-5	44
3. Plasmids Carrying Hybrid <i>trpL</i> -Synthetic Translation Initiation Signals—the pJ1-7 Family	44
IV. Bacterial Expression of IFN by IFN- α 1 Plasmids	45
A. Response to <i>trp</i> Regulation	45
B. Optimal Translation Initiation Signals	48
C. IFN Biological Activity and the Integrity of the N-Terminus Amino Acid Sequence of IFN- α 1	49
V. Conclusions and Comments	51
VI. References	53

Genetic Engineering of Human Interferons From Lymphoblastoid Cells: III. Purification, Physicochemical and Biological Properties of Bacterial IFN- α 1

Haim Grosfeld, Sara Cohen, Baruch Velan, and Avigdor Shafferman

I. Introduction	60
A. Purification of Human Leukocyte Interferon	60
B. Biological Activity of Purified Human Leukocyte Interferons	62
II. Materials and Methods	63
A. Bacterial Strains and Media	63

B. Growth of Bacteria Producing met-IFN- α 1	64
C. Cell Extraction Procedures	64
1. Lysis by Lysozyme and Freeze Thawing	64
2. Disruption of Cells by Yeda Press	64
3. Disruption of Cells by Sonication	64
D. Trichloroacetic Acid (TCA) Supernatant Preparation	65
E. Polyclonal and Monoclonal Antibody Immunoabsorbent Column Chromatography	65
1. Preparation of Polyclonal Anti-IFN Antibody Immobilized to Sepharose 4B	65
2. Purification of IFN- α 1 on the Column	65
3. Monoclonal Antibody Column for Human IFN- α Purification	65
F. SDS Gel Electrophoresis for Proteins, and IFN Molecular Weight Estimation	66
G. Cell Cultures, Interferon Assay, and Purified Interferon Types	66
III. Results and Discussion	67
A. Purification of IFN- α 1	67
1. Partial Purification of IFN- α 1 on Polyclonal Anti-IFN Antibody Affinity Chromatography	67
2. Complete Purification of met-IFN From Bacteria Harboring pJ1-4	68
B. Physical Characterization	71
C. Biological Activity of IFN- α 1	72
IV. References	75

Electrofusion: A Novel Hybridization Technique

U. Zimmermann, J. Vienken, J. Halfmann, and C.C. Emeis

I. Introduction	79
II. Fundamentals of High Electric Field Effects	81
III. Cell Membrane Contact by Nonuniform Alternating Fields	89
IV. Electrofusion	92
V. Yeast Hybridization	96
A. Diploid Yeasts That Are Heterozygous for Mating Type	97
B. Haploid Yeasts of the Same Mating Type	99
C. Haploid and Polyploid (Triploid) Yeasts	101
VI. Plasmid Transfer by Electrofusion	107
VII. Hybridoma Cells	108
VIII. Application of Cell Rotation to Fusion	116
IX. Problems of Regeneration, Plasmogamy, and Karyogamy	116
X. Fusion Chambers	122
XI. Fusion in Solutions of High Ionic Strength: Electromechanic and Magneto-Electrofusion	127
XII. Electrofusion by Electromagnetic Waves and Spark Discharge: A Hypothesis for the Production of Cells in the Course of Evolution	133
XIII. Perspectives on the Electrical Breakdown Technique	140
XIV. References	144

Production, Characterization, and Clinical Utility of Carcinoembryonic Antigen

Wing Kam, Dean Tsao, Steven H. Itzkowitz, and Young S. Kim

I. Introduction	152
II. Source of CEA	152

III. Purification of CEA	153
A. Perchloric Acid Extraction Method	154
1. Crude Extract	154
2. Perchloric Acid Extraction	154
3. DEAE Ion Exchange Cellulose Chromatography	154
4. Gel Filtration	155
5. Concanavalin A Chromatography	155
B. Immunoabsorbent Method	155
IV. Structure and Function of CEA	156
V. CEA-Related Antigens	157
A. Tumor-Extracted Antigen (TEX)	157
B. Nonspecific Cross-Reacting Antigen 1 (NCA-1)	159
C. Normal Cross-Reacting Antigen 2 (NCA-2)	160
D. Normal Fecal Antigen 1 (NFA-1)	161
E. Normal Fecal Antigen 2 (NFA-2)	162
F. Meconium Antigen	162
G. Biliary Glycoprotein 1 (GP-1)	163
H. Celia	163
VI. Immunology of CEA and Related Antigens	163
VII. Clinical Utility of CEA	164
A. CEA in Body Fluids	164
B. CEA Metabolism	165
C. Plasma CEA Assays	166
D. Gastrointestinal Malignancies	166
1. Gastric Cancer	166
2. Cancer of the Pancreas	167
3. Colorectal Cancer	168
4. Gallbladder and Liver Cancer	169
E. Benign GI Disorders and Extragastrintestinal Malignancies	169
F. Radioimmunodetection and Immunotherapy	170
VIII. Conclusions	171
IX. References	171

Microbial Conversion of Sulfate to Sulfur—An Alternative to Gypsum Synthesis

Douglas J. Cork

I. Introduction	183
II. Background	184
III. Bioprocess Theory and Application	186
A. Factors Affecting the Availability of Sulfate-Reducing Power	186
B. Single-Stage Microbial Processing	187
C. Two-Stage Microbial Processing	187
1. Overview	188
2. Reactor Design and Kinetics	190
IV. The Sulfur-Producing, Photosynthetic Biocatalyst	191
A. Material Balances and Microbiology	191
B. Molecular Biology	194
C. Biochemical Pathways and Models	195
V. Control and Optimization of Microbial Sulfur Production	197

A. Static Batch Versus Fed Batch Reactions	197
B. Formation of Oxidized Sulfur Products	198
C. Bioreactor Control Parameters	199
D. Computer Control of Microbial Sulfur Formation	202
VII. Economic Analysis	203
A. Cost of Photons	203
B. Cost of Organic Reducing Power	205
C. Bioprocess Credits	205
VII. Conclusions	206
VIII. References	206

Flocculating Agents of Microbial Origin

Christopher F. Forster, Nicholas J.B. Knight, and D.A. John Wase

I. What Is Flocculation?	212
II. How May Flocculation Be Achieved?	212
III. Systems Involving Autoflocculation	213
A. Activated Sludge	213
B. Yeast Flocculation	213
IV. The Nature and Importance of Microbial Surfaces	214
V. Methods for the Extraction of Microbial Polymers	215
A. Exocellular Polymer	215
1. Exocellular Polymer From Activated Sludge	215
2. Exocellular Polymer From Pure Cultures	216
3. Comparisons Between Extraction Methods	216
B. Total Polymers	218
1. Natural Autolysis	218
2. Chemical Lysis	218
3. Thermal Lysis	219
VI. Microbial Surfaces and Bioflocculation (Autoflocculation)	219
A. Yeasts	219
B. Activated Sludge	220
VII. Microbial Polymers as Flocculating Agents	227
A. Test Methods	227
B. Effectiveness of Microbially Produced Flocculating Agents	228
C. Stability and Preservation of Microbially Produced Flocculating Agent	229
VIII. Further Factors To Be Considered in the Manufacture and Use of Microbial Flocculating Agents	230
IX. Concluding Remarks	235
X. References	236

Secondary Metabolites From Plant Cell Suspension Cultures:

Methods for Yield Improvement

J.S. Rokem and I. Goldberg

I. Introduction	242
II. Methods for Improvement of Product Synthesis	244
A. Screening and Selection	244
B. Influence of Medium Constituents on Product Formation	247
1. Production Kinetics	248

x ◇ Contents

2. Carbon Source	249
3. Nitrogen Source	251
4. Phosphate	253
5. Minor Medium Constituents and Vitamins	253
6. Plant Growth Regulators	255
7. Precursors and Analogues	257
C. Environmental Factors Influencing Product Formation	258
1. Light	258
2. Temperature	259
3. pH	259
4. Aeration	259
D. Other Factors Influencing Product Formation	260
1. Differentiation	260
2. Inoculum Size, Growth Rate, and Growth Yield	261
3. Regulation of Biosynthetic Pathways and Enzymology	261
4. Accumulation of Intermediates	262
5. Genetic Approaches to Increase Product Formation	262
6. Immobilization of Plant Cells	263
III. Future Trends and Directions	263
IV. References	264

Blood Fractionation: Proteins

Martin H. Stryker, Maurice J. Bertolini, and Yu-lee Hao

I. Introduction	276
II. Raw Material Source	278
III. Fractionation Techniques and Products	279
A. Methods Based on Interaction With Physical Parameters	279
1. Cryoprecipitation—AHF	279
2. Differential Thermal Denaturation—Albumin	281
3. Electrodecantation and Electrodialysis	283
4. Electrophoresis	283
B. Methods Based on Interaction With Chemical Precipitants	284
1. Ethanol—Cohn Fractionation System	284
2. Ethanol—Method of Gerlough (Method 6G)	284
3. Ethanol—Method of Kistler and Nitschmann	288
4. Ethanol—Deutsch Method for Preparation of ISG	289
5. Ethanol—Hink Method for Preparation of PPF	289
6. Ethanol—Hao Method for Preparation of NSA and ISG	291
7. Ethanol—The Continuous, Small Volume Mixing (CSVM) Fractionation Process	291
8. Ammonium Sulfate	293
9. Caprylic Acid	294
10. Rivanol	294
11. Polyethylene Glycol	294
12. Zinc	298
13. Polyphosphate	299
14. Amino Acids	299
C. Methods Based on Interaction With Solid Phases	299

1. Silicon Dioxide	299
2. Calcium Phosphate—Prothrombin Complex	300
3. Ion Exchange Chromatography—NSA	301
4. Ion Exchange Chromatography—Prothrombin Complex	302
5. Solid Phase Polyelectrolytes	303
6. Affinity Chromatography	303
7. Affinity Chromatography—Fibronectin	304
8. Affinity Chromatography—AT-III	305
9. Affinity Chromatography—Plasminogen	306
10. Affinity Chromatography—Factor IX	306
11. Permeation Chromatography	307
D. Chemically or Enzymatically Modified Proteins	309
1. Selective Cleavage/Modification—IV-IG	309
2. S-Sulfonation—IV-IG	310
3. Reduction and Alkylation—IV-IG	310
4. Acid-Pepsin Treatment—IV-IG	311
5. Plasmin Treatment—IV-IG	311
IV. Liquid-Solid Separation	312
A. Centrifugation	312
B. Filtration	312
V. Removal of Solvent and/or Salt	312
A. Lyophilization	312
B. Thin Film Evaporation	313
C. Gel Filtration	313
D. Ultrafiltration and Diafiltration	313
E. Acetone Drying	314
VI. Possible Contaminants of Plasma Protein Products and Their Removal	314
A. Endotoxins	314
B. Viruses	315
C. Active Enzymes	317
VII. Analytical Methods and Quality Control	318
A. Methods for Assessing Molecular Integrity	319
B. Methods for Assessing Purity	320
C. Methods for Assessing Potency	320
1. Coagulation Products	320
2. Fraction II Products	321
3. Other Products	322
VIII. References	322
 Index	 337
Contents of Volumes 1, 2, and 3	353

Genetic Engineering of Human Interferons From Lymphoblastoid Cells: I. Cloning of Interferon Species Expressed in Sendai-Induced Namalva Cells

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I. Introduction	2
A. The Human IFN- α Family	2
B. Heterogeneity of IFN Species Activated in Different Cells by Various Inducers	6
II. Methods	7
A. Construction of a Namalva cDNA Library	7
1. Preparation of RNA Enriched for IFN-mRNA	7
2. Synthesis of Double-Stranded cDNA	7
3. Cloning of ds-cDNA Into pBR322	8
B. In Situ Hybridization	8
1. Hybridization With ^{32}P -labeled Oligonucleotides	8
2. Hybridization With ^{32}P -labeled DNA Fragments	9
C. Labeling of Nucleic Acids	9
D. Preparation of Plasmid DNA	9
E. Restriction Endonuclease Analysis	9
F. Nucleotide Sequence Determination	10
G. Synthesis of Oligonucleotide Probes	10
H. Assay of Interferon	10
1. Determination of IFN Activity in <i>Escherichia coli</i>	10
III. Expression of IFN-mRNA Species in Sendai-Induced Namalva Cells	10
A. Screening of a Namalva cDNA Library With IFN- α and IFN- β Specific Oligonucleotide Probes	10
1. Isolation of IFN- β cDNA Clones	11
2. Isolation of IFN- α cDNA Clones	11

3. Characterization of the Various IFN- α cDNA Clones by Restriction Enzyme Analysis	12
B. Nucleotide Sequence Analysis of a Novel IFN- α cDNA . .	13
C. IFN- α 1 Is an Active Gene in Namalva Cells	15
IV. Discussion	16
V. References	19



I. INTRODUCTION

Currently three types of interferons (IFN) are recognized on the basis of antigenicity and amino acid sequences—IFN- α , IFN- β , and IFN- γ [1]. The human IFN- α class consists of multiple species, which will be described below. There is some controversy about the number of species of the IFN- β and IFN- γ class. However, only one definitive member of each of these types was isolated and characterized [for review see 2,3].

The ability to induce antiviral activities at femtomole concentrations is a common feature of IFN molecules. In addition, the IFNs exhibit a wide range of activities such as immunomodulatory and antiproliferative activities [4]. Furthermore, various human IFN preparations manifest differences in specific activities on different target cells [see reviews in 3,5,6]. All these differences may be a reflection of the heterogeneity in the IFN species. A systematic study of each interferon species in a given IFN mixture that is produced by a known inducer could lead to an evaluation of future artificial mixtures for clinical purposes. In the next sections we will provide a brief summary of the current state of knowledge regarding the heterogeneity in the human IFN- α gene family and the complex combination of these genes under different inducing conditions in different cells.

A. The Human IFN- α Family

Thirteen nonallelic genes of the IFN- α gene family have been identified so far by DNA sequencing (Table I). However, the IFN α gene pool is larger, as can be concluded from genomic DNA analysis and from amino acid sequence analysis of IFN- α proteins. Analysis of two genomic DNA libraries [22,23] revealed more than 20 IFN- α genes [2,3, 7-12]. Some of these genes are distantly related (designated IFN- α -like genes) showing less than 80% nucleotide sequence homology to IFN- α 1 [10] or IFN- α C [3]. Amino acid sequence analysis of IFN- α polypeptides was performed on IFN- α mixtures or on individual IFN- α polypeptides prepared from different cell types [see

reviews in 19–21]. Collins [2] has compiled and compared the amino acid sequences of IFN- α polypeptides and amino acid sequences deduced from IFN- α genes or cDNAs. From this comparison it seems that 19 polymorphisms appear in the peptide sequences for which no known sequenced gene exists. This may be due to either artifacts in the amino acid sequencing method or to high incidence of allelic variants as shown in Table I. That a high incidence of allelic variation does indeed exist is clearly shown by the isolation of four alleles from a genomic library of a single individual [22]. These four alleles (α 4a, α 4b, α 10, and α L) represent two loci [10–12]. In a genomic library from a different individual [23] an additional allele for each of the two loci was found [3] (Table I). The polymorphism is also manifested by the cases where a large number of gene sequence polymorphisms exist for which no corresponding amino acid has been found in the peptide sequences [2]. This may be a result of (a) use of inducing conditions that are not suitable for expression of the given gene (b) difficulties in detection of the specific IFN polypeptide that is expressed at low efficiency, (c) the presence of pseudogenes that either express defective polypeptides (like IFN- α L [11], IFN- α 10 [10], and IFN- α E [13]), or which are not induced at all.

Weissmann et al. [12] proposed to classify the IFN- α into two main subfamilies. Subfamily I includes α 1(D), α 2(A), α 5(G), and α 6. Subfamily II, previously designated subfamily C [11], consists of α 10(C), α 7, α 4, α C1, and α F. An intermediate subfamily includes α H and α 8. All of the IFN- α genes and IFN- β 1 are localized on chromosome 9 [24]. The genes of subfamily I are dispersed, each one of them was found on a different 15–20-kilobase (kb) DNA genomic segment [7,9,12]. Subfamily C genes are more clustered. A cluster of three genes was found on a 20-kb DNA segment [3,11,12]: α C (α 10, α L, or α C* allele), α J (α 7, α J, or α C4 allele), and α 4 (α 4a, α 4b, or α C2 allele). Another DNA segment contains α C1 gene as well as α H and another H-like gene [8,68]. α C, α J, and α 4 show 92–96% amino acid sequence homology (Table I) and are flanked by regions of extensive homology [10]. Nucleotide sequencing of about a 10-kb DNA segment that includes two of these genes shows that α J and α L(α C) are located on two tandem repeats of 4 kb showing an extremely high degree of homology [11]. This arrangement probably reflects a recent gene duplication event. The minimal divergency among these genes can be useful in studying the response of the different but closely related genes to various inducers, and in elucidating the DNA sequences responsible for the gene expression as well as in the determination of structure-function significant domains. Such a comparison between the antiviral activity of IFN- α J and IFN- α C will be described in the following chapter [6].

TABLE I. Amino Acid Sequences of Human α -Interferons*

		-20 -10 1 10 20 30 40 50 60 70																					
Genomic	cDNA	S VL Y A I G E																					
		MALPFSLLMALVYLSKSSSLGCDLPOTISLCHRRITMLLAQMRISPFSECLKDRHDFGPECEFDGNOFQKAQAISVLHNTIQQTFLNLPSTK																					
1	$\lambda\alpha 1$	$\alpha 1$	SP A	VLV	C		E	D	T	M	S	S	M			P	L	I	T	K			
		$\alpha 0$	SP A	VLV	C		E	D	T	M	S	S	M			P	L	I	T	K			
2	$\lambda\alpha 2$	$\alpha 2$	T A	VLL	C	V		S	T	M	R	L			•	ET P		I		K			
		αA	T A	VLL	C	V		S	T	M	R	L			•	ET P		I		K			
3	$\lambda\alpha 6, \alpha K$		P A	LV	C	D		H	T	M	R	L		R		E		V		K			
4	$\lambda\alpha 5$		P V	LV	NC	I		S	T	M	M	G				K				K			
		αG																		K			
5	$\lambda\alpha H$		P A	M	LV	C		N	S		N	T	M	M	R		E			M	K		
		αH	P A	M	LV	C		N	S		N	T	M	M	R		E			M	K		
		$\alpha H1$	P A	M	LV	C		N	S		N	T	M	M	R		E			M	K		
6	αE					LP		A	V	A	F	I	T	R	Y	D	HQV	H	H	V	FLF	M	K
7	$\lambda\alpha 8$		T Y	V	LV	Y	FS				A	I	R			E		DK				K	
		$\alpha 8$	T Y	M	LV	Y	FS				A	I	R			E		DK				K	
8	$\lambda\alpha C3$		RS	VVL	Y	I				R	A	I	G			E	R	E	H	T			
		$\alpha J2$									R	A	I	G			E	R	E	H	T		E
		$\lambda\alpha 7, \lambda\alpha J, \lambda\alpha C4$	RS	VVL	Y	I					R	A	I	G			E	R	E	H	T		E
9	$\alpha J1$		RS	V	L	Y	I				R	A	I	G			E	R	E	H	T		E
			S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G	G			R	I				E	
		$\lambda\alpha 10$	S	V	L	Y	I+				T	R	A	I	G	G		R	I				E
10	$\lambda\alpha L$		S	V	L	Y	I*				T	R	A	I	G	G		R	I			E	
			S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G	H			E	H				E	
		$\lambda\alpha 4b$	S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G	H			E	H	T				E
11	$\lambda\alpha C2$		S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G	H			E	H	T			E	
			S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G	H			E	H	T			E	
12	$\lambda\alpha C1, \alpha I$		S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G			P	L			T		E	
		αF	S	V	L	Y	I				A	I	G										K
		-20 -10 1 10 20 30 40 50 60 70																					

The amino acid (a.a.) sequences were deduced from nucleotide sequences of cloned genomic DNAs and cDNAs. The consensus a.a. sequence is adapted from Weissmann et al. [12]. Differences from this sequence are indicated for each gene, $\lambda\alpha 1$ [9], $\alpha 1$ [14], $\lambda\alpha 2$ [7], $\alpha 2$ [15], $\lambda\alpha 4$ - $\lambda\alpha 10$ [12], αA - $\alpha H1$ [13], $\lambda\alpha C1$ ($=\alpha I$), $\lambda\alpha H$ [8,69], $\lambda\alpha L$, $\lambda\alpha J$ [11], $\alpha J1$ [16,18], $\alpha J2$, αK [17]. All the genes designated by λ are derived from a genomic library of one individual [22], except $\lambda\alpha C^$, $\lambda\alpha C2$, $\lambda\alpha C3$, $\lambda\alpha C4$ [3] which are derived from a different individual [23]. The IFN- α species that are underlined have incomplete sequences: αG lacks the sequence from a.a. -23 to 33; $\alpha 4a$ from a.a. 126 to 161; αE from a.a. -23 to -5; $\alpha C2$ from a.a. -23 to 77; $\alpha C3$ from a.a. 54 to 166; αK and $\alpha J2$ lack the signal peptide. The basic organization of the table is according to Weissmann et al. [12], which is now updated to include nine additional IFN- α species. Genomic sequences for the same locus are displayed consecutively and are indicated by numbers (on the left side). cDNA sequences which did not