

Additional file 1. List of bacterial strains employed.

	Characteristics	Source or reference
Bacterial strains		
<i>Brucella melitensis</i>		
<i>B. melitensis</i> 16M	<i>B. melitensis</i> biovar 1 16M nalidixic acid -resistant spontaneous mutant; virulent.	UNAV collection [26, 27]
<i>Bm16M::Tn7GFP</i>	<i>B. melitensis</i> biovar 1 16M complemented by chromosomal insertion with a miniTn7 transposon carrying the <i>gfpmut3</i> gene; Km ^R .	This work
<i>Bm16MΔvirB</i>	<i>B. melitensis</i> biovar 1 16M mutant strain lacking a functional VirB system (non-polar mutant in <i>virB10</i>).	Centre d'Immunologie de Marseille-Luminy collection
<i>Bm16MΔvirB::Tn7GFP</i>	<i>B. melitensis</i> biovar 1 16M mutant strain lacking a functional VirB system complemented by chromosomal insertion with a miniTn7 transposon carrying the <i>gfpmut3</i> gene; Km ^R .	This work
Rev1	<i>B. melitensis</i> Rev1 vaccine reference strain.	CITA collection
Rev1::Tn7GFP	Rev1 vaccine-strain complemented by chromosomal insertion with a miniTn7 transposon carrying the <i>gfpmut3</i> gene; Km ^R	This work
<i>B. abortus</i>		
<i>B. abortus</i> 2308W	<i>Brucella abortus</i> 2308 virulent biovar 1, smooth LPS, spontaneous nalidixic acid resistant. It is virulent in mice and has been sequenced and found to differ from 258 and 258A.	UNAV collection [28]
<i>Ba2308W::Tn7GFP</i>	<i>Brucella abortus</i> 2308W complemented by chromosomal insertion with a miniTn7 transposon carrying the <i>gfpmut3</i> gene; Km ^R .	This work
<i>Escherichia coli</i>		
S17λpir pUC18R6KT-mini-Tn7- <i>gfp</i> -Km	Tp ^R Strp ^R <i>recA thi hsdRM</i> ⁺ , lambda pyr phage lysogen RP4::2-Tc::Mu::Km Tn7.	UNAV collection
SM10λpir (pTNS2)	pTNS2 is a helper plasmid encoding the TNsABC+D transposition pathway (Amp ^R).	[33]
HB101 (pRK2013)	pRK2013 is a helper plasmid for mobilization of non-self-transmissible plasmids (Km ^R).	[33]

¹ Amp, ampicillin; CITA, Centro de Investigación y Tecnología Agroalimentaria de Aragón; DAP, 2,6-diaminopimelic acid; Km, kanamycin; Nal, nalidixic acid; ^R, resistant; Strp, streptomycin; Tc, tetracycline; Tp, trimethoprim.