



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MMI Genomics Announces a Diagnostic Assay to Determine Polled Cattle Genetics**

**—Field trial initiated; product introduction planned for Summer 2004—**

*Davis, Ca., January 12, 2004*—MMI Genomics, Inc. (MMIG), a wholly owned subsidiary of MetaMorphix Inc., announced today the discovery of a Homozygous Polled Diagnostic assay for use in cattle. This discovery was made possible through the use of MMIG's proprietary whole genome bovine SNP map, the most advanced bovine genetic tool of its kind. The discovery was also facilitated through cooperation with the North American Limousin Foundation.

The presence of horned cattle increases injury rates during transportation and in the feedlot prior to harvest. The cost to the beef industry is in the multi millions, arising from the need to dehorn the animals, bruised meat and a decreased capacity in both pens and trucks. The beef industry has responded to these concerns by working to develop and propagate polled (an absence of horns) genetics in a variety of cattle breeds. MMIG's proprietary diagnostic assay will allow breeders to make earlier and more informed selection decisions on young bull calves enabling them to enhance their quality polled genetic programs.

“We continue to be excited by the variety of commercial applications for advanced selection tools arising from our work with the bovine genome SNP map,” said Stephen Bates, Vice President and General Manager of MMI Genomics Inc. “Our Corporation's goal is to not only supply consumers with an improved meat supply but to answer production concerns of the beef industry. An ability to determine with great accuracy whether or not an animal will produce horns is a great benefit to the industry and the beginning of a long line of tools we plan to provide for improved genetics.”

MMI Genomics, Inc. has launched a field trial with the North American Limousin Foundation, as well as several key individual breeders within the Charolais, Gelbvieh, Hereford, Salers and Simmental cattle breeds. This field trial will take place over the next three months, and will serve two key purposes. The trial will, first, validate the discovery across a broad range of breeds and second, facilitate the development of the full-scale commercial product targeted for release early summer of 2004.

**About MMI Genomics, Inc.**

MMI Genomics Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of MetaMorphix Inc., is based in Davis California. MMIG develops innovative life science technologies to introduce environmentally friendly solutions that improve food and human and animal well-being.

**About MetaMorphix, Inc.**

Founded in 1994 and based in Savage, Maryland, MetaMorphix, Inc., a privately held life sciences company, is dedicated to discovering and commercializing multiple technology platforms to naturally improve the food supply and human health.

Drawing on three distinct technology platforms – growth differentiation factors (GDFs), genomics/proteomics and immunopharmaceuticals – MetaMorphix has more than a dozen products in various stages of development. These products are intended to vastly improve livestock breeding and production and to create more nutritious, consistent-quality meat. Further, the company is leveraging a licensing agreement, using its GDF technology platform, to research potential applications to serious human health conditions.

*Certain statements in this press release are forward-looking. These may be identified by the use of forward-looking words or phrases such as “believe,” “expect,” “intend,” “anticipate,” “should,” “planned,” “estimated,” and “potential,” among others. These forward-looking statements are based on MetaMorphix Inc.’s current expectations. The Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 provides a “safe harbor” for such forward-looking statements. In order to comply with the terms of the safe harbor, MetaMorphix Inc. notes that a variety of factors could cause actual results and experience to differ materially from the anticipated results or other expectations expressed in such forward-looking statements. The risks and uncertainties that may affect the operations, performance, development, and results of MetaMorphix Inc.’s businesses include but are not limited to; (1) unproven use of scientific information to develop or commercialize products; and (2) other factors that might be described from time to time in MetaMorphix Inc.’s business plan and regulatory filings.*