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MetaMorphix, Inc. and Willmar Poultry Company establish Turkey Joint Venture

—Joint Venture to utilize Myostatin™ technology to improve turkey meat quality and production efficiency—

Savage, MD, and Willmar, MN- December 10, 2002—MetaMorphix, Inc. announced today the formation of a Joint Venture with Willmar Poultry Company, Inc. to develop, manufacture and market products utilizing MetaMorphix's Myostatin™ technology platform in turkeys. The Joint Venture plans to develop superior turkey and to market by establishing key relationships with turkey producers in North America.

One of MetaMorphix's lead technology platforms, Myostatin™, a natural protein present in turkey and other livestock animals, is a potent regulator of muscle growth. Inhibiting Myostatin™ in livestock is expected to produce more skeletal muscle, reduce fat, increase muscle protein and feed efficiency, as well as decrease waste.

MetaMorphix has licensed the rights of Myostatin™ in turkeys to the Joint Venture. The \$2.8 Billion U.S. turkey industry is the largest producer of turkey meat in the world with 285 million birds per year produced, accounting for 50% of world production. Willmar Poultry with its affiliated companies is the largest supplier of poults and hatchery vaccine equipment to U.S. turkey producer companies. The Joint Venture will market the turkeys based on the generation of value-added premiums anticipated from the production of healthier, more nutritious and meatier birds. Both parties will share equally in development costs and profits.

"The establishment of this Joint Venture with Willmar creates an unprecedented opportunity for MetaMorphix," said Edwin Quattlebaum, MetaMorphix, Inc.'s Chairman and CEO. "Sharing the development and the marketing responsibilities of Myostatin™ with a world class leader in turkey poult production and supply, allows us to bring the benefits of this technology to the majority of turkey producers in the United States. Our hope is that producers will reap the benefits of Myostatin™ through lower production costs as well as meeting the retail and consumer demand for superior turkey meat. "

Rick Huisinga, the COO of Willmar Poultry said, "In this day of increasing consumer demand for enhanced taste, as well as meat that is safer and more naturally produced, our Company objective is to meet this demand. We are confident that Myostatin™

technology will allow the turkey industry to produce higher quality meat with less reliance on antibiotics, and continue the turkey tradition of not using added hormones or steroids. Forming this Joint Venture with MetaMorphix illustrates our commitment to explore innovative technology to meet consumer demand.”

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.

About Willmar Poultry Company

Willmar Poultry Company is a family-owned turkey production and technology company founded in Minnesota in 1945. Today, Willmar Poultry’s main business and expertise is hatching turkey eggs.

Willmar Poultry and its affiliated companies are known in the industry for their emphasis on researching and developing new products that enhance turkey health and value. Affiliated companies include Nova-Tech Engineering, a designer and manufacturer of robotic hatchery equipment, and Epitopix, a developer of novel vaccines and biologic technologies to improve the welfare and performance of poultry and livestock, while improving human food safety. Epitopix research is strengthened by collaborative agreements with the University of Minnesota.

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.