

## MetaSystems and Xenometrix Agree on Partnership to Market New Automated Ames II / Ames MPF Test Analysis Concept

Date: 03-15-2010 01:48 PM CET

Category: [Health & Medicine](#)

Press release from: [MetaSystems](#)



The bacterial reverse mutation (Ames) test is a screening test used to help identify chemicals that affect the structure of DNA. It is based on the mutation rate of Salmonella bacteria that are exposed to the tested compound. The test is compliant with the OECD regulatory system for mutagenicity tests (guideline 471, 1997), and is integral part of early drug safety assessment systems.

MetaSystems, the leading manufacturer of professional image analysis systems for toxicology and mutagenicity research, and Xenometrix ([www.xenometrix.ch](http://www.xenometrix.ch)), producer and distributor of today's most advanced Ames mutagenicity assays (microfluctuation assays) and cytotoxicity screening kits, decided to co-market their products, aiming to full automation of the Ames II / Ames MPF mutagenicity assay.

The Ames MPF and Ames II assays from Xenometrix are modified versions of the Ames test using liquid culture instead of agar plates. The assays use 384-well microtiter plates and have a colorimetric read-out. The great advantage of this format is the lower amount of samples needed and much easier handling. In addition, cytotoxic effects of a test compound are already detectable after 90 minutes exposure (instead of 48 hours) and can be re-tested immediately with the same cell culture.

The automated slide scanning platform Metafer of MetaSystems is widely used for automated analysis of toxicology test samples. It provides the possibility to automate analysis of various tests commonly used in genetic toxicology and radiation research. This includes the chromosomal aberration test, the cytokinesis block micronucleus assay, the rodent erythrocyte micronucleus assay, and the Comet assay.

“The automated analysis of the Ames II / Ames MPF test based on Xenometrix’ 384-well microtiter plates adds additional value to the versatile, Metafer-based analysis system for genetic toxicology”, MetaSystems officials said. “It is now possible to automate and archive analysis of the most important pre-clinical tests on one hardware platform with full GLP compliancy.”

MetaSystems is an employee-owned German company specializing in automated scanning and image analysis for cytogenetics, cancer genetics, toxicology, pathology, forensic sciences and other applications. Founded in 1986 as spin-off from the Institute of Applied Physics at the University of Heidelberg, the company started with the development of an automatic metaphase finding system.

Today, more than 1,200 laboratories in 70 countries rely on the quality and stability of MetaSystems products. Most of the European countries are supported directly from MetaSystems headquarter situated in the vicinity of Heidelberg. In many other countries MetaSystems is very proud to have strong exclusive partners, who take care of the local MetaSystems sales and support our customers in their region.

The North American market is covered by the US office (MetaSystems Group Inc.) located in Boston, MA. In 2005, MetaSystems opened a branch office in Hong Kong, China, named MetaSystems Asia Ltd. It provides technical and sales support to the Far Eastern and Southern Pacific regions.

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