

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**BIOLEX THERAPEUTICS ENTERS INTO
AGREEMENT WITH MERCK KGaA FOR ANTIBODY OPTIMIZATION**

PITTSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA, February 19, 2008 - Biolex Therapeutics today announced that it has entered into an agreement with Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany, acting for its division for innovative pharmaceuticals Merck Serono, to evaluate antibody optimization and production in Biolex' proprietary LEX SystemSM. The cooperation will evaluate the ability of the LEX System to improve therapeutic profiles through optimization of antibody glycosylation structures.

As reported in *Nature Biotechnology* in December 2006, Biolex has engineered its proprietary LEX System to produce antibodies with a fully human glycosylation structure without fucose. Research suggests that antibodies with a glycosylation structure lacking fucose may have greater efficacy and potency as a result of enhanced antibody dependent cellular cytotoxicity (ADCC), particularly in the treatment of cancer, autoimmune diseases, infectious diseases and inflammatory diseases. The LEX System also has the ability to produce antibodies that have a fully "G0" glycosylation structure, lacking galactose. Research suggests that a G0 glycosylation structure provides the additional potential benefit of reducing complement dependent cytotoxicity (CDC), thereby reducing side effects and the long infusion times associated with certain antibodies. Preclinical results associated with LEX System optimization were also presented at the 49th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Hematology (ASH) in December 2007.

"Antibodies are the fastest-growing class of therapeutics in the pharmaceutical sector, and glycosylation can play a significant role in their therapeutic profile," said Mr. Jan Turek, Biolex President and Chief Executive Officer. "We are pleased to work with Merck Serono, a leader in biologics, to investigate the potential benefits that can be achieved by linking their novel antibody candidate with the glycosylation optimization capabilities of the LEX System."

About Biolex Therapeutics

Biolex is a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company that uses its patented LEX SystemSM to develop hard-to-make therapeutic proteins and to optimize monoclonal antibodies. The LEX System is a novel technology that genetically transforms the aquatic plant *Lemna* to enable the production of biologic product candidates. The company's product candidates are designed to provide superior efficacy/tolerability profiles and to address large, proven

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pharmaceutical markets. Biolex's lead product candidate, Locteron®, under joint development with OctoPlus N.V (Euronext: OCTO), is in Phase 2 clinical trials and is the only controlled-release interferon alfa known to be currently in clinical development for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C. Biolex has also developed two other product candidates that capitalize on the benefits of the LEX System, which it is advancing toward clinical trials: BLX-155, a direct-acting thrombolytic designed to dissolve blood clots in patients; and BLX-301, an anti-CD20 antibody it is optimizing for the treatment of non-Hodgkin's B-cell lymphoma and other diseases.

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