

# CMD 506

## 506 - Investigating Changes in Canadian Consumers' Food Safety Concerns, 2003 and 2005

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### Research Summary

This application seeks funding to provide for graduate student support to undertake an analysis of food and environmental quality importance rankings that are (through the mechanism of a component of a survey for a separate project, funded by Genome Canada and AARI) to be collected in July and August 2005. In the course of this survey, data will be sought from some 400 respondents to a Canada-wide survey. The project proposed to the Consumer and Market Demand Network will include comparative analysis of Canadian's food and environmental concern ratings in 2005 with those from a similar assessment that was made by some 840 respondents to an earlier Canada-wide survey in January 2003. A number of food safety events have occurred since the initial body of data was collected in early 2003. These include isolated but highly publicized incidents of discovery of BSE in Canada, as well as several incidents of bacterial contamination of food. Comparative analysis will be undertaken in order to assess whether there have been changes in concern rankings in the light of these and other food safety incidents. An assessment will also be made as to the nature of the socio-demographic and related factors that appear to have influenced the most recent concern rankings and that may be associated with any changes in these from 2003. The project will support the MSc thesis research of graduate student Yu Li. Michele Veeman and Wiktor Adamowicz are supervisors of Ms Li's research work.

### Significance of Research

Concerns about issues of food safety and environmental quality associated with agriculture are considered to be major drivers' of consumers' demand for food. However, there is little information on how consumers' concerns relating to these issues are formed and whether or how these concerns may change over time. Knowledge of the nature of selected concerns about food safety and environmental consequences of agriculture, whether these concerns are increasing or otherwise, and whether these are associated with socio-demographic or other influences are of interest in providing insights into consumers' demand for food safety and in informing policy and marketing decisions relating to agriculture and food. The project will build on an initial analysis of consumers' concerns about food safety and environmental concerns based on 2003 data and will complement information subsequently made available by a survey constructed by IPSOS Reid for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC, 2004).