Host organization:
Research and Analysis Directorate, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Supervisors:
Samuel Bonti-Ankomah, Deputy Director
T7-4-324, 1341 Baseline Road, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0C5
613-773-3016
Samuel.Bonti-Ankomah@agr.gc.ca

Paul Lirette, Senior Economist
+48-576-087-570
plirette@alumni.uoguelph.ca

Amanda Stamplecoskie, Senior Economist
T7-4-325, 1341 Baseline Road, Ottawa, ON, K1A 0C5
613-773-3535
Amanda.Stamplecoskie@agr.gc.ca

Project title:
Updating AAFC’s Vulnerability Index

In 2009, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada developed a quantitative indicator system capable of illustrating what would be at stake for Canadian crop industries if it were to lose certain key export markets due to a Low Level Presence (LLP) incident. This type of incident occurs when trace amounts of a genetically modified (GM) grain is mixed with other grain varieties, despite the use of best management practices by industry, and is detected in exports to a country where GM crops are not authorized. The motivation for developing this type of index is to expose segments of the agricultural and agri-food sector that could be vulnerable to market closures should an LLP incident occur.

In developing this indicator system, key markets were identified based on the GM tolerance of importing countries and whether or not Canadian exports could have detectable traces of GM crop kinds, of the same or a different species, picked up during the grain handling system. Within these key markets, commodities were identified based on their current GM approval status in Canada as well as the rules and regulations of the importing country. The commodities were then ranked based on their export value for a given country/commodity combination. The top 50 country-commodity combinations were then analyzed.

The issue of LLP incidents in relation to Canadian grain and oilseed exports continues to be an important issue for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, warranting ongoing monitoring efforts. Our aim for this project is to update the LLP vulnerability index with current data, including an update of the list of key markets based on the latest rules and regulations of Canada’s key export destinations, and to analyse new trends that may have emerged since 2009.
The participating student will benefit from conducting this project through gaining experiences in developing a detailed trade related analysis, writing a research report on notable trends and key findings, and communicating research results with AAFC’s Research and Analysis Directorate, which will then be used to help support Canada’s policy development process.

**Student tasks and deliverables:**
1) Review existing literature on LLP policies in key Canadian export market destinations to identify gaps with previous analysis;

2) Analyze trade data which will be used to construct an updated LLP quantitative indicator system, rank the indicator system from highest to lowest risk, and to assess any differences from AAFC’s 2009 LLP vulnerability results;

3) Write a report synthesizing research findings and providing a portrait of today’s LLP vulnerability profile.

**Essential qualifications:**
- Proficiency in MS Excel and ability to apply basic statistical techniques
- Knowledge of basic statistical measures for trade market analysis
- Good writing skills (English or French)

Asset qualification: - Familiarity with current Canadian trade agreements