

Continuing Education Bursary Award Application Statement

Applicant: Phi Pham, CPHI(C)

To: CIPHI Environmental Health Foundation of Canada

Awards Committee,

In my current Master of Science project, I am conducting surveillance on pathogenic bacteria and resistance genes from imported food products. Our current national surveillance program (CIPARS) is very successful in providing surveillance data on our domestic food supply, but there remain gaps on imported food products. The main goal of my research is to study the potential of niche products like snails and bottom-dwelling fish imported from hot spot regions for the development of highly resistant bacteria to our first-line antimicrobials. As we know, potentially hazardous foods are excellent for the growth of bacteria and also vehicles for the dissemination of pathogenic bacteria throughout the food supply chain, right to the kitchen of consumers. As this gap has not been studied in Canada, we do not know what the potential impact on public health is when consumers are exposed to these food products when cooking at home. Results from my project will build on top of existing evidence as to whether imported food products are potential vehicles for the dissemination of pathogens, and which food type we should focus more resources on in order to mitigate against resistant infections.

As a Public Health Inspector, my current project has broadened my knowledge on infectious diseases, pathogens associated with different food types, and the importance of education (infection control) and public health policies to reduce resistant infections in our community and healthcare settings. I hope to utilize what I have and will learn in my research in the field of public health to mitigate the rise in resistant bacteria infections in Canada, whether it be infection control at care facilities and/or food safety at private and public kitchens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Pham'.

Phi Pham, Bsc., BAsc., CPHI(C)