ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the completion of this Ph.D research work, I am obliged to many. I acknowledge with a deep sense of gratitude for the guidance, encouragement and overwhelming support received from my guide, Dr. M. Basheer Ahmed Khan, Reader & Research Guide, School of Management, Pondicherry University. I most sincerely thank Dr. M.T. Thiagarajan, Dean of the School for providing me an opportunity to pursue research at the School and thereby enabled to fulfill my longing desire.

I thank Dr. D. Amarchand, Professor & Head Dept. of Commerce, University of Madras, Madras, for his assistance and support at various stages of the research. I am grateful to the Director, Anna Institute of Management, Madras and the Regional Director, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Madras, for providing access to the libraries.

I sincerely thank Dr. Saleem Ahmed, Research Associate, East-West Center (EWC) Honolulu Hawaii (U.S.A.) who encouraged me to undertake research in the area of Fertilizer Marketing Systems when I was working with him at the EWC as a Research Fellow during early 1980s.

I am grateful to Dr. G. Raghuram, Professor, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad (IIMA) for his valuable advice. I thank Dr. N. Ravichandran of IIMA for providing an opportunity to present some of the thoughts on fertilizer logistics, at the seminar organized by IIMA in 1993.

I am indeed grateful to Mr. S. Seethraman Regional Executive, Fertilizer Association of India, Southern Region, Madras, for providing me the access to the publications and the Library of FAI.
I thank Mr. T.V. Madhavan, Asst. Manager (R&D) HCL - Hewlett Packard Ltd. Madras for developing the optimization software for transportation model.

I gratefully acknowledge the support, cooperation and patience of my family members: Mrs. Shantha Rao my wife and my sons Mr. L. Ravindranath and Mr. L. Anand for the computer support & developing software package and my daughter Miss. L. Vijayalakshmi for the data entry and proof reading of the thesis.

Many executives of the fertilizer industry, officials of the ministry of agriculture and Ministry of fertilizers, Government of India, State Departments of Agriculture, Railways, Central and Warehousing Corporations who have provided key inputs and shared their views and experiences in fertilizers marketing and allied areas for this research, wished to be anonymous. I gratefully acknowledge their assistance and sincerely thank them all.

Despite the suggestions, support and assistance, I received from the above mentioned, the blemishes that may still remain in the thesis are my own.

H. K. Lakshman Rao.