Acknowledgements

The Thesis report marks the end of a long, wonderful and eventful journey for which there are many people whom I would like to acknowledge for their support along the way.

Working on the Ph.D. has been a wonderful and often overwhelming experience. It is hard to say whether it has been grappling with the topic itself which has been the real learning experience, or grappling with how to write papers, give talks, stay up until the birds start singing, and stay focus ...

To my extreme delight, I would like to evince my whole-hearted gratitude and indebtedness to my mentor Dr. B. V. Raol, for introducing me to the fascinating realm of life Sciences. I sincerely thank him for his excellent guidance, teaching, encouragement, benign attention and for helping me out in most stressful times, both scientific and personal, which helped me to think positively and remain optimistic. His scientific temperament, dedication towards his profession and down to earth nature has inspired me the most. Although this eulogy is insufficient, I preserve an everlasting gratitude for him.

I express my profound gratitude to Prof. K. C. Patel, Professor, B.R.D. School of Bioscience, Sardar Patel University, Vallabh Vidyanagar for allowing me to carry out my part of research in a prestigious and well-equipped laboratory. I express heartfelt gratitude for his guidance, helpful suggestion, encouragement, attention and support throughout the duration of research.

A special word of thanks is due to Prof. S. R. Dave, Professor and Head, School of Sciences, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad and Dr. Devyani Tipre School of Sciences, Gujarat University, Ahmedabad for providing necessary laboratory facilities as and when required for the successful completion of this work. I also thank them for constant support, encouragement and inspiration given to me throughout the work. I also thank Dr. H. A. Modi for all his advice and help during my research.

With great gratitude and respect I am also grateful and indebted to Prof. Datta Madamwar, Dr. Ujjaval Trivedi, Dr. Amita Shah, Dr. Prateek Shilpkar, Dr. Pradip Acharaya, Dr. P. Chellapandi, Dr. Nikhil Bhatt, Dr. Srinivas Murty, Dr. Niraj Sheth, Mrs. Preeti Shukla and Dr. Mayur Shah for their invaluable advice, constant support, encouragement and inspiration given to me throughout the work.

I am thankful to Gujarat State Biotechnology Mission (GSBTM), DST, Government of Gujarat, India for providing the help and support for sequencing and identification of
microorganisms during my Ph.D. tenure. I also thank the administrative staff of Gujarat University for their support in administrative aspects.

I am very grateful to Mr. B. K. Singh, Production Manager, Powder Plant, Cheese Processing Unit, Vidya Dairy (AMUL), Khatraj, Gujarat, for kindly providing cheese whey and support during research work.

I express my profound gratitude to Chairman and Secretary, Charotar Education Society, Anand for giving consent to pursue doctoral studies along with job for further carrier advancement. I extend my sincere thanks to Mr. Ketan P. Patel (KD Bhai), secretary, CE Society, Anand and Mr. Vinod Parmar (Veenu Bhai), member CE Society, Anand for constant support and encouragement.

I am also thankful to Dr. J. D. Patel, Principal, Shri A. N. Patel PG Institute, Anand for his consistent support, encouragement and inspiration. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr. D. S. Raj, Former Principal, M. B. Patel Science College and Dr. R. M. Joshi, I/c Principal, M. B. Patel Science College, Anand. I would also like to extend my thanks to Dr. R.R. Panchal, Head, Microbiology department, M. B. Patel Science College, Anand for his consistent support, encouragement and inspiration, advice and help during pilot-scale reactor study.

I find words inadequate to express the appreciation of my affectionate friend Vimal Prajapati and Shobha Prajapati....thanks for a great time, constructive comments and suggestions during thesis writing, ceaseless inspiration, several scientific discussions, lots of fun and good advice throughout.

I would also like to thank Nirav and Raksha for their constant encouragement, munificent support and constructive suggestions at all the time. I extend my thanks to Hardik Shah for the lighter moments shared and unconditional help.

I express my gratitude to my college colleagues Dr. Rajesh Patel, Mr. Maulik Pandya, Dr. Hitesh Patel, Dr. Niraj Singh, Mrs. Payal Patel, Rupesh Jha, Kailash Tiwari, Dr. Chaitanya Chudasma, Amit Mangrola, Sulabh Solanki, Bhavin Patel, Kishor Pratap, Dr. Durgesh Nandini, Jitendriya Panigghi, Swetal Patel, Dr. Kunal Shah, Dr. Kavita and all faculty members for their affection, encouragement and support.

It gives me a great pleasure to acknowledge Dr. Rachana Bhatt and Dr. Bhavik Acharya....more of a friend than a colleague.....thanks for technical support and great scientific discussions.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank the non-teaching staff of Shri A.N. Patel P.G. Institute for their affection and support. I extend my special thanks to Jimmyben, Meghaben, Dharmeshbhai and Piyushbhai for their support.

I am also thankful to all students especially dissertation students Hardik, Bhavisha, Gunjan, Ravi, Smital, Poonam, Jigisha, Jigneah, Priya and Priyanka for fascinating discussions and sharing light moments.

I also extend my special thanks to Aakash, Vijay, Jay, Dhaval and Rachana, Dharmesh Adharyu, Alpesh Patel, Rajendra Prajapati, Sanket and Dhruti, Kiran sir, Umang sir, Ajit sir, and Devalben for their constant encouragement and support.

A special thanks to my Guruji, without bless of him I am unable to complete my work. I owe my deepest gratitude to my dearest father Ghanshyam sinh and mother Nandkunverba for their eternal support and understanding of my goals and aspirations. I would like to extend my thanks to my ever supportive brothers Pradhyanman sinh (Dadabhai) and Balkrishna sinh and bhabhi Bahvnaba and Pratikshaba. I also owe my gratitude to dearest nephew Dhanraj and niece Manjari and Bhakti. Without them, I would not have been able to complete much of what I have done and become who I am.

They are the light that shines my way and the drive for my ever-persistent determination. Without their enduring support and encouragement, it would not have been possible to embark upon this journey in life. Last but not least, I am greatly indebted to my devoted wife Pinal and my son Aniruddha. I have been very fortunate that my wife, Pinal understood, as she often pointed out, that marriage to a researcher requires a very special kind of wife. Her love and support without any complaint or regret has enabled me to complete this Ph.D. project.

It gives me great strength and belief in presence of Almighty; because of his blessing it was possible to bring the completion of my research endeavors in the best possible way. I bow to the divine strength and wish it would dwell throughout my life.

-Gopal Raol