ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This is the most anticipated moment of my research career, as its now that I can divulge the pent up feelings of gratitude to those generous souls who have been instrumental in the accomplishment of this work, by their timely gestures of kindness! Though thanking all the backstage enthusiasts is beyond the scope of this paper pulp, I endeavor to consummate this task to the best possible extent, by following their cue ... man's eternal achievement is never in terms of power or pelf but in their selfless deeds tinged with humanitarian spirit!

"We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take and leave a little of each other everywhere..."

First thing that comes to my mind when I think of my guide, Dr. M. Krishnan, Prof. and Head, Department of Eco-Biotechnology, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, is his superseding confidence, which beyond doubts has had a profound effect on shaping my optimistic approach. His adeptness in suggesting strategies for tackling bottlenecks in the research works, amalgamated with expectations in terms of the quality of research, gave me the impetus to chisel my work and ameliorate it to the best possible extent. I grab this occasion to verbalize my deep-sensed gratefulness to him.

"Footprints on the sands of time have a saga to tell the generations to come..." I extend my deep felt gratitude to Dr. Muthiah Mariappan, former Vice-Chancellor of Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, for imprinting an ever-lasting impression on the minds of researchers with his boundless knowledge, interminable enthusiasm and limitless encouragement. Talking shop with him replenished me with novel ideas. Those ephemeral moments shall stay afresh in my memories.

I fondly reminisce with thankfulness, the opportunities provided by Dr. M. Vivekanandan, Prof. & Head, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli in being a part of the organizing committee, be it Conferences or Workshops. It helped me in getting a full-fledged exposure to convening such programs in addition to the practical knowledge gained out of them. I thank him abundantly for his concern and boundless encouragements.

I consider it a great privilege to have Dr. A. S. Rao, Professor, Department of Biotechnology, Bharathidasan University, as my Co-guide. His keen listening and thought provoking interrogations
has helped me in honing my work. To eulogize him, is surely beyond the reach of my vocabulary but precisely put, he is a mobile Encyclopedia cum a stress buster!

I articulate my deep sensed gratefulness to Dr. L. Uma, Director, and Dr. P. Prabhakaran, Lecturer, NFMC, Bharathidasan University, for their prompt and swift insinuations, well-timed helps and most of all, the sweet gags despite their tight schedule.

I feel obliged to Dr. K.V. Krishnanmurthy, Prof. and Head, Department of Plant Science, Dr. P. Geraldine and Dr. Archunan, Reader, Department of Animal Science, Bharathidasan University, who have unflinchingly permitted me to utilize some of their lab facilities.

I express my earnest thanks to Dr. M. A. Akhsarsha, Prof. & Head, Department of Animal Science, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli, for providing me the facility to carry out microscopical studies.

I endorse my everlasting gratitude to Dr. V. Vasudevan, Director, School of Engineering and Technology, Bharathidasan University, for his special considerations, which was crucial for me to carry out my research work.

"A journey of thousand miles starts with one step"… that one step forward for me was due to the backing of Dr. A. Rajathi, Lecturer, Holy Cross College, Tiruchirappalli. Her initial encouragements, tinged with surplus care made me feel at home!

I gratefully recall the scientific-altruistic favours, extended by Dr. T. Subramoniam, Emeritus Scientist (C.S.I.R), Dept. of Zoology, Madras University, Guindy Campus, Chennai and Dr. R. Selvaraj, Senior Scientist, National Research Center for Banana, Tiruchirappalli, when I found my work stranded due to practical and technical difficulties.

I feel obliged to Dr. V. Rathinavel, AD, Bio-control Laboratory, Tiruchirappalli, for accommodating me in the field trips organized by him, which facilitated my sample collection. I thank Dr. T. Senthilkumar, Lecturer, University-Industry Collaboration, for extending his help in handling the Fluorescent microscope.
I thank the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (C.S.I.R), New Delhi, for the financial assistance in terms of Research Fellowship and further, for granting an extension of 6 months beyond the project tenure, in recognition of the work done.

I heartily thank my friend D. Vijay, for his unstinted and unconditional moral backing whenever I was in dire need of it. I feel blessed to have an awe-inspiring, friend cum brother, Mani, who graced moments with unmatchable love, care and timely favours. I specially thank my friends, Karthi, for the numerous ways in which he showered his concern and support and also for his perseverance in the progress of this work, and Gowri, for being there selflessly and unconditionally, whenever I needed a shoulder to lean on. It's a pleasure thanking my wonderful friend, Muruganandan for his pristine camaraderie and the cheerful ambience, which was a timely boon for me. My heartfelt gratitude is due to my friend cum senior, Dr. Batcha for his encouragements and quick wittedness, which helped me pep up my spirit on sluggish days. I dotingly thank my adorable friends, Chandrasekar for his various helps at the moments of need, and Dr. Ramesh Anbalagan, for the offstage helps rendered with alacrity, that helped me complete some of the experiments in the stipulated time. I thank my sweet friend Sumathi, for the meaningful chit-chats, timely gestures of care and for her anxiety in my progress. My thanks are due to my brothers, Sharat and Karthi for rejuvenating me with their overwhelming zeal and adorables talks, which was a break from monotony.

I acknowledge my friends, Mr. Then, Veterinary college, Miss. Gunamalai, A. C. Tech and Mr. Siva Subramanian, C.L.R.I, Chennai, for their sincere gestures of concern and favours.

I bestow my gratefulness to Mr. Chakravarthy and Mr. Siva, for the fabulous graphics conferred.

I heartily thank my juniors, Miss. Sumithra and Miss. Sridevi for their timely assistance. I also thank Mr. Arul. I thank my sweet juniors Miss. Suganya and Gincy, for their timely helps.

If not for the aspirations and unremitting back up from my father, I would not have championed the cause. The immense freedom, I received from him, is an exceptional gift! For me the simple word that can best describe my greatest blessing, my greatest strength, my greatest inspiration and my best counselor is "my mother." If not for her unflagging support and ultimate understanding, this work would have remained a dream... I express my heartfelt gratitude to my
brother for his unwavering support and concern. I immensely appreciate my family for their forbearance. I feel over burdened with the sentiments of indebtedness as I express my whole hearted gratitude to my aunt, Mrs. Kamala and uncle, Mr. Thanikachalam for their care and concern.

During all the daunting moments in the course of my study, there was only one thing I could consistently rely on, which helped me cope up with a smile and pursue my work; it is the surplus blessings of Almighty!

"The power of God within us is greater than the pressures around us, so don’t limit your challenges, challenge your limits”

...Meena