ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Finally the much awaited moment has arrived to acknowledge the people who stood by me through thick and thin during the process of writing this thesis. The list of names is really long and I am happy about it. For I was privileged to have a trusted band of friends, colleagues and well wishers who did not let me hang my boots on umpteenth occasions, when under bouts of self negation and denial and urge to free myself from the demands of field work based research I had almost given up. This PhD is therefore not entirely mine. Many people nurtured my dream of completing the research through their constant motivational calls, rebuttal, admonition and even sometimes with sharp intended digs ('you don't have that in you') to shake me out of my slumber.

My guide Prof. M.N. Panini has been witness to my life-journey, both on academic as well as personal front, since my days as a young post graduate student at JNU. He has been instrumental in my growth as a researcher and more importantly as a human being. He taught me very early in life the value and significance of discipline, perseverance and humility in any successful venture. I deem it an honor and a privilege ("No over use of adjectives"- I remember sir but this is my page, so forgive me) to have worked under his supervision. The research on Sociology of agribusiness, being a relatively new and less explored terrain in social science research in India, would not have been possible without his critical inputs, suggestions and insights.

The words of gratitude fail me while acknowledging my parents in the making of ‘ME’. Papa I want to thank you for your belief in me. You have been like this always, ever since I can recollect though on many occasions I was not up to your expectations. I have no words to tell you how much this blind, uncritical trust in me from you have sustained me in times of lack of self belief and episodic bouts of doubts which are integral to any intellectual engagement. I want to be like you to Ayush, your grand son, but in a very short period of fatherhood I realize it is difficult to be you: so unconditional and self less. I still will try, I promise. Thank
you mummy for your continuous ‘selfish’ engagement with God through your unending puja and fasts to ensure our well being and success. Ask something for yourself too from your god for a change.

Raja, your threat of not booking your ticket to India until I submit my thesis, seems to have worked. So pack up your luggage now and be ready to fly. Sintoo thanks a lot for being around and constantly exhorting me to aim higher. My special words of acknowledgement are also due to Beenu, Lovely, Suhani, Aanya, Aaryaman and Anshuman for their presence in our family, making life so beautiful and livable. I extend my special thanks to my very affectionate mother-in-law. Thanks mummy for constantly asking me when am I going to finish my thesis in all your phone calls and reminding me of my priorities. Thank you Anjali for your technical support and help (especially for retrieving my files on more than one occasion, which I had forgotten to save leaving me in a tizzy) and for gifting me the pen drive which really made my life easy. Thanks also to Bantu and Maggi for their good wishes.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to have some friends who happen to be die-hard believers. And I guess this has made a huge difference in the way I perceive my life and live it. Professor P.B.Pandey, how can I forget you for teaching me one of the most profound lessons of life – the meaning of equanimity and the audacity to face the challenges of life. Remember your reaction to my transfer to Chaukhutia in Uttarakhand. Thanks Ramda, it helps me even now. I do not have words to express my gratitude to my friend Raji Shrivastava who has been a constant source of strength and motivation. Mihaela Gligor, Iqbal Judge, Manisha and Kamal have been rock solid in their unstinted support and encouragement and I feel miserably sorry for taking them for granted. Sorry guys.

I also would like to register my indebtedness to the farmers of the terai region, especially my interviewees, of Uttarakhand for their support and help extended to me during my field visits. Also heartfelt thanks to that young man in Dinanagar who volunteered to take me to the village from the Dinanagar market on his
scooter and bring me back in the evening on my first visit to the village. I also recall with gratitude the generous and very kind hearted manager of Nanakmatta gurudwara where I spent many nights in the dharamshala during my field visits.

I wish to acknowledge the support extended to me by the library staffs of the JNU library Delhi, the Punjab University library, Chandigarh and the Kumaun university library in Nainital, Uttarakhand. I would be failing in my duty if I do not pay my gratitude to my teachers, past and present, at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems at JNU, Delhi for their contribution in my academic journey. Also, thank you Bharat ji (csss/sss/soc) for your help. I hope the centre realizes your role as a ‘link’ for thousands of students who leave the centre after their stint and who find it hard to accept that there are none around to recognize them on their return in a campus where they first learnt to dream. Last but not the least, thank you Saurabh, Saurabh Subhadarshi to be precise, for your last minute help and support.

Santosh Kr. Singh