ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am immensely grateful to all those individuals who have helped me in making this endeavour possible.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Appa Rao Podile, for giving me an opportunity to work with his group. I am indebted to him for, without him this thesis wouldn’t have been possible. I am also grateful to him for his valuable suggestions and critical examination of this thesis.

I thank the present and former Deans, School of Life Sciences and the present and former Heads, Dept of Plant Sciences for their support in all possible ways. I sincerely acknowledge the infrastructural support provided by UGC-SAP, DST-FIST and DBT and the CSIR, Govt. of India for the research fellowship.

I am very grateful to DST, Govt. of India for the travel grant during my visit to Germany. I here again thank my supervisor Prof. Appa Rao Podile and Mrs. Padmaja Podile for their love, care and affection, which gave me another home in the campus.

I am extremely indebted to Prof. T-Y Feng, Academia Sinica, Taiwan for kindly providing the pYEUT-hrpZ construct.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Dierk Scheel and Prof. Thorsten Nurnberger, Institute of Plant Biochemistry, Halle, Germany for giving me an opportunity to work with their group. I am grateful to Dr. Justin Lee for his valuable suggestions and timely help. I also thank Stefan and Violette for being very friendly with me and making my stay at Germany a memorable one.

I am thankful to Prof. N. Yathindra and Prof. M. Ponnuswamy, Dept. of Crystallography and Biophysics, University of Madras for collaborating with us.

I thank Prof. M.N.V. Prasad, and Prof. N. Shiva Kumar, School of Life Sciences for their valuable suggestions. I am also thankful to Dr. G. Padmaja and Prof. Aparna Dutta Gupta for extending their lab facilities.

I am grateful to Late Prof. Ch.R.K. Murthy, Dept. of Animal Sciences for his valuable suggestions and Late Prof. B.G. Maiya, School of Chemistry, University of Hyderabad for allowing me to use his Gel Documentation Facility extensively.

I am also thankful to Ms. Rama, GVK Biotech, for the suggestions and help.

I would like to express my thanks to my senior Dr. Shreeram for helping me learn most of the molecular biology techniques and thanks are also due to Dr. Kishore for his timely help. My special love and thanks to Ms. Madhuri and Ms. Tripura for their affection and
helping nature. I also thank my other lab colleagues Ms. Neeraja and others for being very friendly, co-operative and creating a healthy atmosphere in the lab, which is very important for an uninterrupted research.

I thank Mr. Satyanarayana, Mr. Gopal and Mr. Madhu, our lab assistants, for their help and co-operation.

I am very grateful to my friends Sharada, Anita, Sravan, Bhuvana, Senthil, Sudar and Arif for their care, support and help during my stay in the campus.

I am thankful to all my batchmates and other research scholars of the School of Life Sciences especially Ms. Aparna, Ms. Subhashini and Mr. Rajasekhar for their help.

I would like to thank all the non-teaching staff, School of Life Sciences for being cooperative and helpful.

I am very grateful to all my teachers, right from my school days, who in more ways than one played a role in making this endeavour possible.

Last but not the least, I would like to express my deepest sense of gratitude and respect to my parents, brothers and sisters and other family members for their love, affection, care and not to mention their support and constant encouragement towards achieving my goal.

I am highly indebted to my brother Prakash, for being my pillar, who has been my inspiration and without whose constant encouragement and support, I wouldn’t have come to this level in my career.

Finally, thanks to my husband, for his encouragement, love and moral support during the final stages of my Ph.D. I have no words to express my gratitude to him for his patience and understanding.

Priya