Acknowledgement

It is a pleasant task at this moment of accomplishment, to express my thanks to all those who contributed in many ways to the success of this study and made it an unforgettable experience for me.

First and foremost, I gratefully acknowledge my guide Prof. T. Satyanarayana, for providing necessary infrastructure and resources to accomplish my research work. I also warmly thank him for his valuable advice, constructive criticism and his extensive discussions around my work.

My sincerest thanks are due to Prof. J. S. Virdi (Head, Department of Microbiology) for his constant support and encouragement. I am also grateful to Prof. R. K. Saxena, Prof. R. C. Kuhad, Prof. Rani Gupta, Dr. Swati Saha, Dr. Amita Gupta, Dr. Rajeev Kaul and Dr. Yogender Pal Khasa for their helpful suggestions, cooperation and inspiration.

My special thanks to Prof. Sheela Srivastava (Department of Genetics) for her genuine advice and support, and allowing me to use her lab facilities. I am indebted to Dr. M.V. Deshpande (National Chemical Laboratory, Pune) and Dr. Uma Rao (Indian Agriculture Research Institute, New Delhi) for their help, advice and allowing me to use their lab facilities. My sincere appreciation is due to Ph.D. students of these laboratories too.

It is my pleasure to acknowledge the suggestions, support and help received from my seniors Dr. Deepak Chand Sharma, Dr. J. L. Uma Maheswar Rao, Dr. Parvinder Kaur, Dr. Bijender Singh, Dr. Manju Bhardwaj, Dr. Pardeep Kumar and colleagues Venkat, Adarsh, Archana, Digvijay, Vikas, Deepta, Swati, Nisha and Shazia. I warmly thank Krishan Kanti, Kakoli Di, Pritesh, Ekta, Swati, Firdaus, Arti, Sonia and Amandeep for lending helping hands whenever needed.

I am very grateful to Meena Ma'am, Satish Ji, Mustafa Ji, Madan Lal Ji, Rishipal Ji and Akhtarji for their timely help in numerous ways. I am lucky to have a very supportive lab staff. I can’t thank enough Jagdishji and Dev for their technical support and whole-hearted cooperation. The help and cooperation extended by Rakesh Kumar and Faninder Pandey is gratefully acknowledged.

I sincerely acknowledge all my seniors, juniors, colleagues and friends from our and other departments who have helped me scientifically, technically and personally at some point of time during this tenure.
I admire the distinguished helping nature of Renudi. Her friendship and encouragement helped me sail through many rough times. I enjoyed wonderful company of friends Ruchi, Archu, Poonam, Aprajita, Sonia, Shalu, Jaya, Vatika, Tanvi and Parul who became my family here.

The financial assistance provided by ICMR throughout the research tenure is gratefully acknowledged.

The unbelievable support and constant encouragement which I received from my parents was the foundation stone for reaching where I am today. Mummy and Papa, I hope I have succeeded in fulfilling your dreams. I wish to thank my brother Ankur, for his unconditional affection.

Finally, I close this in the name of Almighty, who blessed me the courage and patience to overcome difficult moments.

(Bharti Rohatgi)