ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Words are inadequate to express my sincere thanks to Dr.R.Premkumar Samuel Asir, M.Sc., Ph.D., Deputy Director, UPASI TRF – TRI, under whose guidance the work was carried out. Besides constant encouragement and critical suggestions, his views on research and the diligent nature has inspired me throughout the course of the study. I owe my interest in the research carrier to him.

My sincere thanks to Dr.P.Mohankumar, Director, UPASI Tea Research Foundation, Tea Research Institute for his constant encouragements, support and critical suggestions.

My heartfelt thanks to Dr.U.I.Baby, Ex Plant Pathologist, UPASI TRF – TRI and Dr.N.Muraleedharan, Ex Advisor, UPASI TRF – TRI, Dr.B.Radakrishnan, Joint Director, UPASI TRI and Dr.S.Manian, Professor and Head, Department of Botany, Bharathiar University, for their encouragement and support. My sincere thanks to Dr.R.Rajkumar, Senior Plant Physiologist for his constant and critical suggestions and timely inputs especially in the statistical analysis.

My research credits goes to Dr.T.Balakumar and Dr.M.R.James, Ex Professors of Botany, The American College, Madurai. My special thanks are due to Dr.C.Sankara Narayanan, Professor of Botany, Saraswathi Narayanan College, Madurai, Dr.P.Govindaraj Senior Scientist, Sugarcane Breeding Institute (ICAR), Coimbatore for brought me continuing the research carrier.

My heartfelt thanks are shared by Dr.V.Ravi., Dr.V.Selvakumar, Mr.Murugu Ilanchezian, Mrs.Sathiya Meena, Mr.K.N.Muthuganapathy, Mr.Caleb Johnson Parajothi, Mr.V.Saravanan, Dr.K.K.Natarajan, Dr.P.Vasudeven, Mrs.Pandima Devi and my lecturers and professors of both undergraduate and post graduates courses.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help and support from each and every colleague of my department. I am indebted to my colleagues Dr.M.Jayaparakashvel, Mr.R.Arivazhagan, Dr.Soumik Sarkar, Dr.D.Ajay, Mrs.N.Pradeepa, Mrs.R.Jayanthi, Mr.Jackson Samuel ascher, Mr.P.Nepolean, Mr.T.Kuberan, Mrs.R.Vidhya Pallavi, Ms.T. Beulah, Mrs. T.Princy, Mrs.L.Lakshmi Priya for their cooperation and timely help. My thanks
are due to Mr.M.Karuppiah, Mr.Devendran and Mr.Prakash for their kind cooperation, timeless help rendered by them in carrying out all nursery and field trials with fruitful findings.

My heartfelt and deepest credits and thanks are due to childhood friend, Mr.A.Sahul Hameedu. My special and heartfelt thanks to Dr.G.Kottur, Dr.S.Sreenivasan, Mr.A.Satheshkumar, Mr.K.Poobathyraj, Dr.S.Jayaganesh, Mr.E.Edwinraj, Mr.M.Sankararamasubramaniam and Dr.A.Roobakumar, Mr.P.Prabhakaran, Mr.D.Kirubakaran, Dr.M.Saravanan, Mr. M.Krishnamoorthy, Dr.S.Muthukumar of UPASI TRI and Dr.R.S.Senthilkumar, Mr.S.Murugesan, Dr.Survottam Joshi, Dr.M.Jayaganesh, Dr.P.R.Rahul, Dr.K.M.Maria John, Dr.R.Karuppih, Dr.S.Nagarathinam, Dr.Poongothai and Dr.Ganesh kumar for their technical help and clarifications during my course of study.

The critical suggestions rendered by Dr.P.Ponmurugan, professors and other colleague of K.S.R.College of technology, Tirucengode, Namakkal District were gratefully acknowledged.

Thanks are also due to Dr.Victor J.Ilango, Head, Botany Division, Mr.N.Palani, Quality Manager, Dr.V.A.Sanmugaselvan, Senior Residue Chemist, Dr. Chandrasekara, Senior Biotechnologist and all Senior advisory officers of UPASI TRF for allowing me in their division to proceed the work.

Without the blessings and co-operation of my parents, family members, relatives and friends, it would not have been possible for me to complete this publication. I am indebted for their support extended to me, both physically and mentally.

It is my duty to place my regards to my parents for constant support and encouraging me well to furnish this finding. The credit for the successful completion of thesis work goes to the tireless inputs rendered by Mrs. B.Bagyalakshmi, my beloved life partner. The wholesome support extended by my blood relations and in laws is gratefully recalled.

Above all, I thank almighty for all the blessings in my life

(A.Balamurugan)