CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 1
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE 5
III. MATERIAL AND METHODS 60
IV. RESULTS

1. Screening of microorganisms 75
2. Improvement of the strain 78
3. Transformation of progesterone by spores of Aspergillus ochraceus in shake flasks
   (a) Effect of spore concentration 80
   (b) Effect of oxygen transfer rate 80
   (c) Effect of incubation time 81
   (d) Effect of substrate concentration 81
   (e) Effect of sporulation media 84
   (f) Effect of carrier solvent 84
   (g) Effect of carbon sources 84
   (h) Effect of pH 84

4. Transformation of progesterone by vegetative mycelium of A. ochraceus in shake flasks
   (a) Effect of media 89
   (b) Effect of pH 89
   (c) Effect of carrier solvent 89
   (d) Effect of oxygen transfer rate 89
(e) Effect of substrate concentration 93
(f) Conversion rate 95

5. Effect of metabolic intermediates, amino acids, metabolic activators and inhibitors on hydroxylation of progesterone by mycelium of \textit{A. ochraceus} 95

6. Transformation of progesterone by mycelium of \textit{A. ochraceus} in fermenters

(a) Effect of aeration and agitation 98
(b) Effect of liquid height 98
(c) Effect of tip velocity 101
(d) Effect of substrate concentration 101
(e) Effect of conversion rate 101

7. Recovery from fermentation broth 105

8. Identification of 11$\alpha$-hydroxyprogesterone 105

V. DISCUSSION 107
VI. SUMMARY 116
VII. REFERENCES 119