Acknowledgment

With a sense of great regard I take this opportunity with much pleasure to thank all the people who have helped me through the course of my journey towards producing this thesis.

I express my infinite gratitude to Dr. R. M. Devarumath, Scientist, MB & GE Div., VSI and my Ph.D guide for his effective supervision and freedom of work and thoughts. I owe indebtedness to him, for rendering worthy suggestions and supporting me during the present research work.

I fail words to express my gratitude to Dr. Prashant G. Kawar, Scientist, MB & GE Div., VSI for his invaluable advices and devotion, unfailing encouragement, priceless guidance and unconditional, unstinting support in my life, please, accept my deep appreciation. Completion of my thesis is the result of his intellect of honorable guidance and co-operative nature. His warm and positive nature has contributed to making this journey rewarding and enjoyable. It has been a privilege and pleasure to learn and work with him.

I am highly obliged to Mr. Shivajirao Deshmukh, Hon’ble Director General for encouragement and motivation, Dr. Rajaram Deshmukh, Director, Agricultural Science and Technologies, and Dr. K.H. Babu, Head, MB & GE Div., Vasantdada Sugar Institute, Pune for giving an opportunity and financial support towards completion of my doctoral research studies. Prof. N.J. Pawar, Hon’ble Vice Chancellor, Shivaji University, Kolhapur for encouraging me to carry out doctoral work under Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

I, as the author of this thesis also records sincere gratitude to Dr. S.S. Kamble, Head; Dr. G.B. Dixit, Department of Botany, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Prof. V.S. Ghole, Head Environmental Science, Research Coordinator, MB & GE Div., VSI and Prof. D. Theertha Prasad, Head, Center for Plant Biotechnology, GKV, Bangalore for
their most able useful suggestions, illuminating guidance and fruitful criticism, which provided me, solace during tenure of this investigation.

I believe, the dream begins with a teacher who believes in you, who tugs and pushes and leads you to the next plateau, thus I express my profound sense of reverence and gratitude to my beloved teachers Naidu Sir, Zanjurrao Sir and, Barmukh Sir, Modern College, Pune and Dr. K.N. Dhumal, Department of Botany, University of Pune for your invaluable help, for being always supportive, understanding and constantly inspiring for shaping and modulating my life to do my best throughout, as well as my all other teachers for inspiring me.

My sincere thanks to VSI administrative staff worth mentioning Dr. Kapil Sushir, Plant Breeding Div., for providing sugarcane germplasm for candidate gene analysis, Sanjay Sir, Art Div., for graphical presentation and M. R. Shinde Sir, Stat Div., for statistical analysis. I have immense pleasure and especially grateful to my colleagues Prabu, Harikrishan, Pranali, Smita, Sarang, Sharan, for helping me for all the experiments assistance and useful insights, including labmates Gargi, Viniti, Supriya, Gauri, Anagha, Pallavi, Sachin K, Sachin D, Balasaheb, Amit, Ravi and non-technical persons worth mentioning Rajumama, Ghulemama, and Shinde & Ghule maushi for helping me at various point of time with whom I share tons of fond memories.

It will be unfair if I don’t mention the names of Shree SaiRaj Biotech, Pune and GeneOmbio Tech. Pvt. Ltd., Pune for their prompt sequencing services and supply of bio-chemicals on short time notice.

I ought you my best thanks to all my friends, Aboli, Pranali, Vishakha di, Rupa Mutha, Varsha, Ayodhya. Pranav, Amit, Nilesh, Pramod, Raj for being always supportive and understanding. My special thanks to Hemangi for always being on my side sharing my dreams and Kapil for your care, devotion & support, Ram & Mahendra University of Pune, for there kind help regarding statistical analysis and Arun (Shivaji Uni.) for helping me in various points.
I take this opportunity to express my deepest sense of gratitude and regards to my relatives noteworthy Vidya didi, Raju Uncle & Banthiya family, Hemant bhaiya, Santosh bhaiya, Bhabi, Masaji, Neeta Masi, Raju Mama, Mamiji, my all Atayas, my lovely brothers Pranav, Karan, Suyash, Sujit, Pallavi, Sejal, my sweet little Diya, Tukaram kaka, and my all other relatives for their kind moral support, inspiration and affection.

Last but not least, words cannot convey my deepest sense of gratitude and regards to my dear Mummy, Papa, Uncle, Aunt, my small brothers Chetan, Gaurav, and sister Pooja, Late Grandparents and Mayur bhaiya, my dear family which are the sources of my strength. Please, accept my heartfelt thanks for your incomparable love, whole-hearted support, irreplaceable heartiness, love, patience, kindness and understanding. I am who I am, because of you. And it’s their all blessings in bringing the cherished expectation true and to the Lord Shree Swami Samartha and Mahavir Swami for showering their blessings always.

I express my sincere acknowledgement to all the scientists and researchers whose work in form of reviews provided me the most important segment of this manuscript.

Thanks are also due to them who directly or indirectly have been source of help and inspiration whose mention did not find place on this desired submission.

There are no words to match my gratitude, however much like Shakespeare I might write
“Above all else, you all shaped my attitude nurturing me with discipline and light”

Date: 31.12.2010         (Pagariya Madhuri Chandrakant)