ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, Who says in His Glorious book, “Iqra! (or Read!) in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who has created (all that exists). Who has taught (the use of) the pen.” And peace and blessing of Allah (SWT) be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our beloved Prophet Muhammed (SAW) who said, “Seek knowledge from cradle to grave.” I praise You Allah (SWT) for everything You bestowed upon me, especially for Your favour in completing this work.

Immense pleasure and honorific, I feel in expressing my sound perception of gratitude and esteem to Dr. Mujeebur Rahman Khan, Reader, Department of Plant Protection, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, my research guide, for suggesting the problem, vigilant guidance, consistent encouragement and critical suggestions throughout the course of investigations and during the preparation of the manuscript of the thesis. It was his intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, articulate manner and academic freedom and integrity that instilled a confidence, rigour and ethic in me to pursue a Ph. D. programme.

I am grateful to Prof. Akhtar Haseeb, former Chairman, presently the Dean and Dr. P. Q. Rizvi, present Chairman, Department of Plant Protection, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh for providing me the necessary research facilities. Sincere thanks are also due to my teachers, Dr. M. S. Ansari, Dr. S. Ashraf, Dr. R. U. Khan and Dr. (Mrs.) Massarat Haseeb for their consistent cooperative attitude. Kind help and cooperation extended by Dr. M. Saghir Khan, Dr. Iqbal A. Khan and Shaba Aapa are acknowledged with appreciation. I am grateful to Dr. G. N. Qazi, Director RRL, Jammu and Dr. V. Verma, Senior Scientist, RRL, Jammu for helping me in arranging PCR study and help offered by Reyaz Bhai in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Junior Research Fellowship (DBT-JRF) through a research project by Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India, under the supervision of Dr. Mujeebur Rahman Khan and Senior Research Fellowships (CSIR-SRF) is gratefully acknowledged here. I express sincere thanks to Dr. Seema Wahab, Advisor, DBT for granting permission to include the research finding of a DBT project (no. BT/PR/1309/AGR/05/98) in my Ph. D. thesis.

I have had the good fortune to be associated with a large number of friends and colleagues, all of whom have had a profound effect on me and helped me in one way or the other during my research. It would be impossible and perhaps inappropriate to try to list them all. Rather let me just single out a few from among the many. They include, Suraya, Shadma, Nabilah, Nakhat, Kahkashan, Anita, Vipin Bhaiya, Abuzar, Nadeem, Arshad (Arshy), Saim Haider, Showkat, Tarique Bhai, Sadre Bhai, Tufail Bhai, Arsalad Bhai, Wajid Bhai, Mahesh Nupender, Manoj, Senthil and all my hall-mates from M. Sc to Ph. D. They provided the loving family environment that afforded me the tranquility and peace of mind that made this work enjoyable and smooth. I admire the care and affection shown by Sadaf Aapa and her family during my stay at Aligarh. Words cannot suffice the help, support and encouragement that Fayaz has extended to me. I thank you Fazu for being there for me whenever and wherever I needed you. My little Mahmud needs a special mention, who poured-in in the last phase of my research work. I do not have words to thank you for your help in fungicide compatibility test when my stamina of doing experimental work had exhausted and there was none of the helping hands except yours. My friend and room-mate, Shabana is acknowledged herewith.
loving thanks for sharing many desperate and delightful moments with me and for venting of frustration during my research work. I could not imagine a life so enjoyable here at Aligarh if I have not met you. Thank you Shabu for every fraction of second that we shared together, you will always remain the precious asset of my life. I would also like to thank with respect your Papa, Ammi, Zeba and others for the affection and care they showered me with. A special word of gratitude is offered to Ashraf and Manzoor Bhai for providing me seeds and literature material needed for my research work. I would like to thank fellows from Microbiology, Zubair, Pervez, Brag Raj, Sorav and others for exchanges of knowledge, skills, and their help particularly to Farha and Farukh for clearing my doubts and confusions related to bacteriology. Special thanks goes to Darakshan for issuing me desired books for quiet a longer time and for her precious dua and encouragements. I also wish to thank Raghib Bhai, Aman Bhai, Iftitah Bhai, Athar Bhai and Akbar Bhai for the regular assistance and cooperation in laboratory work particularly to Raghib Bhai to bear my impatience while issuing the chemicals for my work. Special thanks are due to Aamir Bhai, who always remained by my side to help me in experimental and personal chores.

I wish to acknowledge with respect the workers, Shahnaz Baji, Bano Baji, Anjum. Gulshan, Nazneen, and the labours that were sent from Registrar office. Their presence in the department farm was a blessing as they guarded my crops from grazing animals and thus saved my research life from being grazed by cattle.

I am forever indebted to my Abba, Ammi, Papa, Bhaiya, Prince Bhaiya, Didi, Baju, Huma Api and Bhana for their understanding, endless patience and encouragement when it was most required. I have no words to acknowledge the love and care extended to me by my sister Huma Api and the little angels Arham, Aisha and Ahzam. Thanks Api for being my surrogate family during the time I needed it most and for your continued affections and moral support you are showering me with. You and your love will always remain with me wherever I may be. Dear Papli and Boya, the warmth of your love and affection inspires me everyday. I owe my most deepest and loving thanks to you. Without your continuous BIG love and warm support the making of this thesis would have never been possible. I know that I'm privileged when having the chance to share my life with you; by your very special characters, including your optimistic and positive approach towards life, you have given me enormous energy to deal with both daily routine and pleasure. I thank you for always being ready to fulfil my each and every wish. I admire your patience and thank you for your never-ending cheering for my best. My little kids Ainy, Sadia, Suhaib, Uzma, Zainab and Taha need a special mention for their love and innocent dua that I think played the driving force to attract blessing of Allah to complete this work nicely. Abdullah, who could not see even a ray of sun of this world, is acknowledged here with extreme love. I pray may we meet him in heavens (InshaAllah). I would also like to thank my relatives for the support they provided me through my entire life and in particular I want to offer special word of gratitude to Mastooth Aba, Nisar Bhaiya, Sunil Bhaiya and their families. I also wish to single out Dr. M. Y. Zargar (Gasha) for particular thanks for his help and encouragement. He always provided considered advice on academic and personal matters. Thank you for always standing behind me when various difficulties and toughs arouse bumps on my road.

(Shahana Majid)