ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I thank the almighty for giving me enough strength and courage to accomplish my Ph.D. thesis work successfully.

It was my fortune that made me work under ever inspiring Dr. C. Gopalakrishnan, Principal Scientist, Plant Pathology, Indian Institute of Horticulture Research (IIHR), Bangalore. His untiring knowledgeable guidance, fatherly reprimand and constant encouragement were much more than deserved. His in-depth knowledge in plant pathology has been extremely beneficial to me. I will always remember his calm, patient and relaxed nature while working. No word of mine can adequately express my deep sense of gratitude and respect towards him. I only can confess that it had been a privilege for me to be associated with him during my Ph.D. degree programme for his constant guidance, support, motivation and untiring help during the course of my Ph.D.

It is my pride and privilege to express my sincere thanks and deep sense of gratitude to Dr. B. Thrippeswamy, Co-ordinator and Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology, Kuvempu University, Jnana Sahyadri, Shankaraghatta, Shimoga for his valuable advice, constant encouragement and confidence-imbibing attitude has always been a moral support for me.

I thank the Director, IIHR, Bangalore and Coordinator, ORP Phytofura and the Director, IISR, Calicut for providing facility to carry out my research work.

I wish to thank specially Dr M. Krishna Reddy, Head and Principal Scientist Division of Plant Pathology, IIHR, Bangalore and all staff members of the Division for their encouragement and help during my study.

My special thanks to Dr. M.S. Rao, Principal scientist, Dr. Shivashankar, Principal Scientist, Mr. T.P. Roy, Technical officer, Dr. Paneer selvum, Senior scientist, Mr. Kishore kumar, IIHR, Bangalore, for their help and suggestions during my research work.
I owe a special word of thanks to Dr. Rajaram Hegde, Dean, Department of History, Kuvempu University, Shimoga and Dr. Abraham Vergeese, Director, NBAII, Bangalore, for their immense concern and help in pursuing Ph. D formalities at Kuvempu University.

I am thankful to Librarians and library staff of IIHR, GKVK, Bangalore, for their help in collection of literature and manuals pertaining to my Ph.D. programme.

Sincere thanks to My Colleagues Ms. Geetha, Ms. Pavithra, Mrs. Chaya, Ms. Preeti, Mrs. Aarati, Mrs. Souravi, and Mr. Rajani for their help and cooperation throughout my research work.

I express my most heartfelt and cordial thanks to my friends, Mrs. Lavanya Devi, Mrs. keerthi, Mrs. Tanuja Priya, Mrs. B. Sarita, Mrs. Aasha, Mrs. Geetha, Ms. Bindu, Ms. Shilpa, Mr. K.J. Naveenkumar and Dr. Shivakumar P. Bankar, who have always been a source of inspiration for me during my study.

I owe a lot to my parents, Shri. L.G. Patil and Smt. Sunanda, who encouraged and helped me at every stage of my personal and academic life and longed to see this achievement come true. I express my deep sense of gratitude and affection to my sisters, Mrs. Anita and Mrs. Vijayalakshmi, brother Mr. Vinay and relatives for their boundless love and encouragement to pursue my studies.

Last but not the least, I am greatly indebted to my beloved husband Mr. Basavaraj B. Artal and my son Suchit B. Artal, who form the origin and backbone of my happiness. Their love and support without any complaint or regret during my study has enabled me to complete my Ph.D. work. I owe my every achievement to both of them.

Finally, I wish to extend a warm thanks to everybody who helped me directly or indirectly throughout my Ph.D. work.

Rashmi B. Artal