ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I would like to thank my advisor Professor Madhumita Barooah. It has been an honor to be her PhD student. I appreciate all her contributions of time, ideas and funding to make my Ph.D. experience productive and stimulating. The joy and enthusiasm she has for her research was inspirational and motivational for me, even during tough times in the Ph.D. pursuit.

I also extend my gratitude towards my supervisor, Professor R. N. S. Yadav for his timely advices and support my PhD programme and his contributions of time, ideas and intellectual advice to my Ph.D. experience productive and stimulating.

I gratefully acknowledge UGC, Government of India for providing RGNF Scholarship to carry out my research work and support my study and the Dibrugarh University for their research Program.

I kindly acknowledge the support and blessings of Dr. B. B. Kakoti, the Centre i/c, Centre for Biotechnology and Bioinformatics, Dibrugarh University.

I appreciate the gracious presence of honorable Vice Chancellor Alak Buragohain (Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh) and other esteemed faculty and student members in my dissertation/abstract seminar.

I fondly remember my times spent in the well-stocked and voluminous library at Dibrugarh University in search of available literatures. The separate collection of Ph.d Thesis and Dissertation in the library provided helpful information at the onset of my research programme.

The members of the Laboratory of Microbial Biotechnology, Department of Agricultural Biotechnology have contributed immensely to my personal and professional time at Assam Agricultural University. The group has been a source of friendships as well as good advice and collaboration. I am especially grateful for the lab members who stuck it out in pursuit of PhD with me: Jyoti Prasad Lahan, Budheswar Dehury, Jagajjit Sahoo and Sudipta Sankar Bora. Other past and present lab members that I have had the pleasure to work with or alongside of are PhD students Kishore Sarma, Jyotshna Keot, Madhushmita Borah, Assma Parveen, Zaiba Fatma,
Priyadarshini Deka, Gunajit Goswami, Naorem Romen Singh, Trishna Sharma, Himangshu Baruah, International scholars Abikoye Toyin, Grace Adewoyin and Elijah Adebayo, Technical Assistants Porag Goswami and Biplab Baruah and the numerous summer and rotation students who have come through the lab.

I thank Professor Mahendra K. Modi (Head, Department of Agricultural Biotechnology, AAU, Jorhat) and Professor Bidyut K. Sarmah (Director, DBT-AAU Centre, AAU, Jorhat) for their consistent support and perseverance towards my research. I acknowledge the DBT-AAU Centre, AAU and Distributed Information Centre (DIC), AAU, for the technical and logistics support in executing this research.

I also thank Professor P. B. Sen and Professor S. Singh for inspirational discussions with me regarding molecular experiments.

The bioinformatics group at AAU gave me advice on molecular characterization processes early on. Surajit Mishra (Information Technology Officer), and Debashish Panda shared some of their expert graphic presentation knowledge with me. I would also like to acknowledge the Xcelris Genomics, Ahmedabad Facility, where I made the molecular primers, and Royal Life Sciences facility where I carried out some of the biochemical characterization part.

For this dissertation I would like to thank Jyoti P. Lahan, Sudipta Sankar Bora, Kishore Sarma, Ankur Gogoi, Navajyoti Gogoi, Monjil Rajkonwar, Dibyajyoti Baruah, and Deva Kumar Mahanta for their time, interest and helpful comments.

My time at AAU was made enjoyable in large part due to the many friends and groups that became a part of my life. I am grateful for time spent with roommates and friends, for my field-trip buddies and our memorable trips into the hills of Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family for all their love and encouragement. For my parents who raised me with love and compassionate towards people and supported me in all my pursuits.

Thank you,

Saurav Das