ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is my immense pleasure to express heartfelt gratitude to my respected teacher and guide, Dr. Laxuman Sharma, Associate Professor and Head of Department, Department of Horticulture, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim, for his able guidance and suggestion, sustained interest, kind encouragement and constructive criticism during the course of investigation. His sincerer monitoring and encouragement made the work complete with perfection. It has been my privilege to work under him. I am extremely indebted to him for being meticulous throughout the investigation and preparation of this manuscript. I will remain obliged to him in my personal thought and career.

I avail to express my humble respect, deep sense of indebtedness to Dr. S. Manivannan, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture and Dr. K.D. Bhutia, Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture and member of my advisory committee for their valuable suggestion, inspiration and liberal help during the course of research.

I express my profound gratitude to Dr. Biswajit Gopal Roy, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry, for his valuable and kind help.

I wish to record my deep sense and advent to Dr. Niladri Bag, Associate Professor, Department of Horticulture, Dr. Sujata Upadhyay, Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture, Dr. Manju Rana, Assistant Professor and Mr. Rajesh Kuamr, Assistant Professor, Department of Horticulture for their valuable suggestion, inspiration and kind help rendered during the course of research.

A full of gratitude and warm regards to Prof. J.P. Tamang, Dean, School of Life Sciences, Sikkim University, Gangtok, Sikkim for his generosity in extending valuable support and needs.

I take this rare opportunity to record my heartfelt love and sincere thanks to my ever supporting father Mohammad Alamgeer Ahmad and my ever loving mother Shabra Khatoon, younger sister Nagma and younger brother Arshad and Afzal.
I owe my special thanks to Mr. Dinesh Rai, lab attendant, Mr. Venkat Ramana Muddarsu and Mr. Jitendra Kushwaha, Department of Horticulture for their help during the present course of investigation.

Colorful blossoms would not have bloomed without the company of my lovely friends, I heartily thank to my friends particularly Bikas, Yamuna, Nadia, Trisang, Anjana, Dikki, Keisam Pradeep, Sangay, Suren, Kabita, Smriti, Doma, Vivek, Bahadur, Divya and Reymit for their love and kind co-operation.

The presentation that follows is the work assisted by many seen and unseen hands and minds. I am thankful to all of them.

Gangtok, 2018

(Uzma Khatoon)