PREFACE

The inspiration to select this topic came as a result of my exposure to the views of the public distribution system as operated through fair price/ration shops in Kerala. As a boy in the teens, I witnessed the miseries of the poor people depended on the puffed foodgrains during the scarcity periods in the Sixties.

I am very grateful to Professor G.S. Gupta, my thesis supervisor, of Indian Institute of Management, who readily spent a lot of time with me in shaping the conceptual framework and developing the methods of analysis.

At the Indian Institute of Management, I had the opportunity of discussing the subject with Prof V.S. Vyas, former Director and Prof G.M. Desai among others. Prof C. Gopinath, Chairman, Centre for Management Agriculture at the Institute, encouraged me to undertake the work by providing various supporting facilities. Prof S.C. Bhat, former Chairman, Computer Services at the Institute was generous enough in allowing me to utilize the computer facilities. I am grateful to all of them.

There were several colleagues whose help I was privileged to enjoy in the field of computer programming. Shri B.H. Patel and Dr. K.R. Rao introduced me to computer data processing. Shri B.H. Patel not only wrote several programmes but also helped me in writing a
number of them in the process.

I am grateful to Miss K. Barathi of the Institute for typing
the thesis neatly, within a short time.

I acknowledge with thanks the financial assistance provided
by the Indian Council of Social Science Research for data collection
and computer use.

Last, but not least, my wife Latha, helped me in several ways
especially in the preparation of data for computer processing.
Both she and our infant son could not get the attention and affection
they deserved from me during the thesis work. I acknowledge my
gratitude to them.

Indian Institute of Management
Ahmedabad

June 12, 1983.