

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those who have contributed to the work described in this thesis. First and foremost, I thank Dr. Deepak K Tuli, Centre Co-ordinator, Bioenergy Research Centre (BERC), Faridabad for accepting me as a PhD scholar in his group. During my tenure, he contributed to a rewarding experience by giving me intellectual freedom in my work, supporting my attendance at various conferences, engaging me in new ideas and demanding a high quality of work in all my endeavors. His quality and teachings to throw head, heart and hand in the work has given my job a new vision. His support is the most essential in my success and deserves extraordinary applause.

I express my sincere gratitude and deeply indebted to my PhD supervisor, Dr. Ravindra Kumar, Senior Research Manager, BERC for his invaluable guidance, support, motivation and encouragement. His stimulating suggestions, enthusiastic approach and positive view towards research helped me all time in my research and completing this thesis. From him, I learned that nothing is impossible and even the largest task can be accomplished if done one step at a time. He has been a great mentor and a person who has not just contributed to my scientific development but also enlightened my moral values. I could not have imagined having a better supervisor and mentor for my PhD than him.

I greatly benefitted from Prof. Pal Borjesson, Lund University, Sweden and sincerely thank him for accepting me as a visiting student for 3 months short term research fellowship in 2015. He was involved in all of my research projects and has a contribution in my research articles. Mr. Ravi Prakash Gupta deserves credit for providing much needed assistance with administrative tasks, reminding me of impending deadlines and keeping our work running smoothly at the Centre.

I am thankful to my PhD co-supervisor, Dr. Pankaj K Sharma, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies (UPES), Dehradun for his timely support and suggestions as and when required to complete PhD synopsis, abstract and thesis. Dr. Pushpanjali Singh and Mr. Farmer, Assistant Registrar, UPES had constantly shared work related information and helped me a lot in completing all PhD related formalities successfully at UPES.

It was a great learning experience while working with Dr. Manali Kapoor on experiments at pilot plant and laboratories. My practical and technical knowledge has enhanced a lot after working with her. I am also thankful to my senior labmates Dr. Ruchi Gaur, Dr. Surbhi Semwal and Mr. Teerath for providing a

friendly, cooperative atmosphere at work and also useful feedback and insightful comments on my work.

I am grateful to the funding agency, Department of Science and Technology (DST) for providing me Inspire Fellowship to pursue PhD. I am also thankful to Department of Biotechnology for providing me working space at DBT- IOC Centre for Advanced Bioenergy Research, Faridabad. My special thanks to Swedish South Asian Studies Network for providing funding and opportunity to work with Prof. Pal Borjesson at Department of Energy and Environmental System Studies, Lund University, Sweden.

I would like to acknowledge the Bioenergy Research Centre and my colleagues working in this group for their assistance in some way or other. The high quality weekly seminars conducted by the group members were a much beneficial thing for my research career. Dr. Biswajit Basu, Chair Professor, DBT deserves special thanks for lighting up the stressful moments with his lively chats, suggesting some really good movies, novels and places for hangouts.

I am extremely thankful to my college best friends Satish, Raj and Varinder for their well timed suggestions and encouragement during the course of this work. This acknowledgement is incomplete without the mention of my family, my biggest support system. Their encouragement, support, faith and extreme care helped me to cherish this dream. Mom and Daddy, thank you for staying behind me and always pushing me ahead. My special thanks to my sister Ekta for her inspiring talks, brother Gaurav for his unconditional help and support and bhabhi Poonam for giving me uber delicious food when I was writing thesis. My cousins Sachin, Nitin and Lavi deserve a lot of credit for the successful completion of this thesis as they are the people who were always keen on learning my subject. They are the people who pushed, pulled and accompanied me on the way.

Lastly, I would thank God for giving me the strength and wisdom to complete this task and sending all the above mentioned people in my life as his angels.

I would like to apologise to those whose names do not figure here, but have helped me during the tenure of my research.

Shveta Soam