ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my major advisor Professor Vinod Patidar for the continuous support of my Ph.D. study and research, for his patience, motivation, enthusiasm, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor for my Ph.D. study. I really appreciate his willingness to meet me at short notice every time to discuss research related problems. I am grateful to him for holding me to a high research standard and enforcing strict validations for each research result, and thus teaching me how to do research. He is an inspiration.

My sincere gratitude is reserved for Professor Deepak Khazanchi, Associate Dean (College of Information Science & Technology, University of Nebraska, Omaha, USA) my Co-Adviser, for his unwavering support, collegiality, mentorship, invaluable insights and suggestions during the entire period of my research work.

I thank other members of my research advisory, Professor Ghanshyam Purohit, Associate Dean (Research) and Dr. Dhirendra Chhajed’s insightful comments and constructive criticisms at different stages of my research were thought-provoking and they helped me focus my ideas.

I am grateful to Professor P. C. Deka, Vice Chancellor, and Professor A. Chaudhary, Pro-Vice Chancellor, SPSU for their encouragement, practical advice and thought provoking questions during the progress presentations, during the entire period of my research work. I am also thankful to them for reading my reports, commenting on my views and helping me understand and enrich my ideas.

I thank Mr. Ashok Ghosh, President, SPSU and Mrs. Rinu Ghosh, Vice President, SPSU, for their endless faith, giving me an opportunity and financial support to carry out my research work, during the entire course of my Ph.D.
No research is possible without the Library, the center of learning resources. I take this time to express my gratitude to all the library staff for their services. I thank the members of the library Mr. P.K. Panigrahi and his team for their endless support and help in accessing the books and journals. I also thank the entire ITS-team for running the smooth internet network and solving the software problems off and on. I would like to thank administrative and technical staff members of SPSU, who have been kind enough to advise and help in their respective roles.

Mrs. Poonam Saini, was kind enough to undertake the editing work and I acknowledge the meticulous work she has done for this entire thesis. The entire editing work, all the commas and full stops display her energetic dedication, sincerity and dexterity in handling the entire thesis work.

I am also indebted to Prof. Knut Kvaal, Department of Mathematical Sciences and Technology, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU), Norway, Dr. ing. Gerrit Polder Researcher, Computer Vision & Robotics Wageningen UR Greenhouse Horticulture, The Netherlands. Lorenzo Fongaro, Scientific Research, European Commission, Germany, for providing me an opportunity to read their research work and use their software plugins for various image processing tasks. I also thank the entire team of ImageJ and RStudio for their free open source tools for image and data processing.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my parents, for their encouragement, inculcating in me moral values, spirit of zeal and enthusiasm, to take up new challenges, supporting me spiritually throughout my life. Through this platform, I would like to thank my wife, Poonam, my son, Suryanshu and my little angel daughter, Saisha for their endless support, faith and love during the entire period of my Ph.D. work. Without their support and valuable family time which they have sacrificed for my work, this thesis could not have been completed in time.