ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to Professor H. Kamada, Professor T. Fujii and Professor Y. Shiraiwa and Associate Professor S. Satoh of University of Tsukuba for their invaluable suggestions and constructive criticisms throughout the course of my research and preparation of this thesis.

I greatly appreciate the invaluable advice from Professor S. Sakai, Dr. T. Saitou and Dr. K. Sage-Ono.

Special thanks must be accorded to all members of the laboratory for their useful discussions.

Moreover, I am grateful to Drs. Christoph Ringli and Beat Keller (University of Zurich) for their gifts of \textit{E. coli}-produced GRP1.8 and the corresponding antiserum. Many thanks are also due to Drs. Taku Demura and Tsuneyoshi Kuroiwa (University of Tokyo) for help with \textit{in situ} hybridization. I also thank Dr. Keiichi Baba (University of Kyoto) for his useful advice.