



# Okra

## Growing and Harvest Information

Okra is a warm season vegetable that needs full sun exposure in a well-drained area. Because okra has a hard coat, soaking seeds in water overnight helps to increase germination.

Plant okra in the spring 2-3 weeks after the first frost and plant in the fall at least 3 months before fall frost. Direct seed okra into the garden after soil temperature has warmed to 60 degrees F. Plant okra about 2 inches apart and 1 inch deep, with 3 feet between rows.

Okra should be harvested when seed pods are young and tender (about 3-4 inches long). Okra has a rapid growth rate so it is necessary to harvest on alternate days to ensure pods do not become overly mature. Okra that is too mature can be dried, cured, or used in floral arrangements

## Introduction

Okra is a traditionally U.S. southern vegetable that is fairly easy to grow and is decorative in your garden thanks to its flowers produced during growing season. This vegetable is often named "lady fingers" for its long, slender shape, and okra is known to be rich in vitamin A and low in calories.

## Preparation & Storage

### Storage:

- Refrigerate unwashed, dry okra pods loosely wrapped in plastic bags.
- When ridges and tips of pods darken, okra needs to be used immediately

### Freezing:

- Select young, tender pods (about 2-2 1/2 inches long), wash, trim stems
- Place in boiling water to blanch for 3-5 minutes, depending on size of pods
- Cool immediately. Seal in freezer-friendly package

### Canned:

- Make sure to use pressure canner and correct processing times.
- For instruction on canning okra:  
[https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/preserving\\_okra.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/preserving_okra.html)

### Pickled:

- Sterilize pint jars and lids and pack with small pods of okra. Add a teaspoon of sugar and a teaspoon of dried dill weed to each jar.
- In a large pot, combine 5 cups of water, 2 1/2 cups of apple cider vinegar, and 5 tablespoons of pickling salt. Bring to a boil.
- Ladle pickling brine into each jar, filling to 1/4 inch from the top. Seal jars and sit them in hot water bath for 10-15 minutes.
- Let cool and store for 3-6 months.

## Nutritional Benefits

Source	Rating
Vitamins	EXCELLENT
Mineral	GOOD
Fiber	GOOD

## Use By Guide

Fruit State	Use by
Pickled & Canned	3-6 months
Freezing	9 months
Raw	2-3 days



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## Fun Fact:

Okra is sticky and slimy so it provides a great soup thickener, and is often used in gumbo

## Prepare Okra Like This:

Pickled	Roasted
Grilled	Stir-Fried
Fried	Baked

## Try Okra In:

Casseroles  
Pastas  
Salads  
Soups  
Stews  
Stir-frys

## Preparation

### Recipe 1: Roasted Okra

#### Ingredients

- 1 pound okra, rinsed and dried
- 1/2 tbs. olive oil
- 2 tsp. fresh thyme
- 1/4 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- ground pepper to taste
- dash of cayenne powder (optional)

#### Directions

1. *Preheat oven to 450*
2. *Trim okra pods: cut away pod ends and tips, slice in half lengthwise*
3. *In large bowl, mix okra pods with oil and spices until coated*
4. *Place okra on baking sheet in single layer*
5. *Roast for 20-25 minutes until lightly browned, tossing two or three times while roasting*