



## Okra Planting Guide

### About Okra

Among the most heat- and drought-tolerant vegetable species in the world, okra is a flowering plant in the mallow family. Its edible green seed pods are a wonderful source of minerals, vitamins, antioxidants, and fiber. These pods are often cooked, pickled, eaten raw in salads, and can be used to thicken sauces in various cuisines

\*\*We recommend wearing gloves while touching or handling the okra plants to prevent irritation from the tiny spines on its surface.

### When to Plant

If you are starting your okra seeds indoors, plant them in peat pots 4 weeks before the average last spring frost. If you're starting them outdoors, plant them 3-4 weeks before the last spring frost but make sure to cover them with a cold frame to protect them against the cold. If you want to wait until they will not need covered, plant when the soil has reached 65-70 degrees F.

### Where to Plant

As a warm-weather crop, okra requires full sun. While it is adaptable and will grow in most soils, it performs best in well-drained soil that's rich in organic matter. Soil should be slightly acidic, with a pH between 5.8 and 7.0.

### How to Plant

Soak seeds overnight in warm/room temperature water to help seeds germinate. Sow the seeds 1" deep in rows that are 3' apart. The seeds generally germinate in 2-12 days.

### Caring for Okra

Okras love the heat and can withstand a dry spell, but generally prefer 1" of water per week. Mulch and fertilize as needed. Once the plants start to grow, thin them so they are spaced 12-18" apart. Harvest after about 60 days when okra pods are 2-4" long. Cut the stem just above the cap with a knife. Store in plastic bags in the refrigerator where they will last about a week. If you want to save some pods for seed, leave them on the plant and harvest when they become fully mature and almost dry. Remember not to do this if you still plan on harvesting okra to eat, as leaving pods on the plant to mature slows down the development of new pods.