



Okra manual

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SAWiE wishes you all the possible luck in every aspect of your life.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Introduction | 6 |
| Areas and production..... | 6 |
| Varieties of okra | 7 |
| climate and soil | 7 |
| Seed rate and sowing time: | 7 |
| Preparation of land | 7 |
| Method of sowing | 8 |
| Irrigation | 8 |
| Hoeing and thinning..... | 8 |
| Eradication of weeds: | 8 |
| Weed control before sowing..... | 8 |
| Weed control after sowing..... | 9 |
| Fertilizer recommendations | 9 |
| Diseases of okra | 9 |
| Damping off | 9 |
| Okra leaf curl virus | 10 |
| Root knot nematode | 10 |
| Fusarium wilt | 11 |
| yellow vein mosaic disease | 12 |
| Okra leaf spot | 12 |
| powdery mildew of okra | 13 |
| Pests of okra | 13 |
| Aphid | 14 |
| Jassid | 14 |
| whitefly | 15 |
| Red mites | 16 |
| Okra fruit and shoot borer | 17 |
| Mealy bug | 17 |



| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Harvesting of okra | 18 |
| Yield of okra | 18 |
| References..... | 19 |

Introduction



- Okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus* L.) also known as ladyfinger belongs to the family Malvaceae
- It is an important summer crop that is used as a vegetable for cooking, frying, or soup purposes
- Important crop of many parts of the world, its origin is tropical Asia and Africa
- Now it is widely grown in many parts of Pakistan
- Pakistan ranked in 5th number in okra cultivation
- It is rich in vitamins (A, B, C), protein, calcium, potassium, iron, iodine, and other mineral materials
- The stem of okra plant rich in crude fiber that is used in the paper industry

Area and production

- In Pakistan 15529 hectare area is under cultivation with the production of okra is 118986 tons
- Major okra growing cities of Pakistan are Multan, D.G Khan, Rahim yar khan, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala, Vehari, Okara, and Toba Tek Singh
- The average share of provinces in the area and production of okra is given below:

Share of all provinces in area and production of okra

| Sr.no | Province | Area (hectare) | Production (tons) |
|-------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Punjab | 5909 | 67058 |
| 2. | Sindh | 4915 | 18995 |
| 3. | Kpk | 2083 | 16809 |
| 4. | Baluchistan | 2622 | 16124 |

Area, production, and an average yield of okra in Punjab (2015-20)

| Sr.No | Year | Area | | Production | Average yield | |
|-------|---------|-------------|----------|------------|---------------|----------------|
| | | 000 hectare | 000 acre | | 000 tons | Kg per hectare |
| 1. | 2015-16 | 5.909 | 14.434 | 67.057 | 11349 | 123.05 |
| 2. | 2016-17 | 5.932 | 14.634 | 68.056 | 11473 | 124.39 |
| 3. | 2017-18 | 5.920 | 14.630 | 68.589 | 11585 | 125.61 |
| 4. | 2018-18 | 5.922 | 14.658 | 70.438 | 11894 | 128.96 |
| 5. | 2019-20 | 5.841 | 14.434 | 70.739 | 12110 | 131.30 |

Varieties of okra

- To get good yield of okra following varieties of okra are recommended:
 - Sabz pari
 - Pusa sawani
 - Arka anamika
 - Green wonder
 - Sharmili (evergreen)

Climate and soil

- Okra is summer season, Kharif crop that requires high temperature for good production
- It can tolerate a wide range of soils and rains and grow well in both dry and wet season
- For better production of okra, the soil should be fertile, granular, and well leveled
- It can be cultivated in well-drained sandy loam soils with good drainage facilities
- For the best yield of okra, the pH of the soil should be 6.0 to 6.8
- Summer crop and highly sensitive to frost
- The optimum temperature should be 25-30°C for better production of okra
- Seed optimum germination is increase at 25°C and germination reduced at a temperature below 17°C

Seed rate and sowing time:

Seed treated with fungicide Topsin M2g/kg before sowing of 24 hours

- For better growth of okra, at least 12-15 kg seeds per acre are required for summer season crop and 8-10 kg seeds per acre are required for rainy season crop
- The first crop is grown from mid-February to march that gives fruit from April to September
- The second crop is grown from mid-June to mid-July that gives fruit in August-November

Preparation of land:

- Incorporate 20 to 25 tons of well-decomposed farmyard manure per hectare one month before okra production
- Two to three times ploughing is done so that the farmyard manure mix very well in soil and then irrigate the field
- Ridges and beds are made on well-prepared soil for the sowing of okra seeds
- Before sowing recommended fertilizers should be applied in ridges and maintain a 75cm distance between ridges

Method of sowing:

- In prepared soil make ridges at a distance of and half feet and dig 1 inch deep lines from both sides
- Seed can also be sown on both sides of the 60-75 cm wide ridges in addition to strips
- Be careful that seeds should not sow at a depth of more than 2 cm
- In addition after seed sowing, irrigate the field in such a way that only moisture can reach the seeds

Irrigation:

- First irrigation is given just after the seed sowing in such a way that water does not rise above the ridges
- Only moisture reaches the seed so that the soil does not harden and seed germination is not affected
- When the weather gets too hot, water requirement increases, so irrigate the field after 4 to 5 days in summer
- In the winter/ rainy season, irrigate the field after 10 to 12 days or whenever required



Hoeing and thinning:

- For better production of okra, hoeing and thinning of plants at right time is very important
- Pruning should be done when the plants are 3-4 inches high, remove all other plants from each hole except one healthy plant
- Thinning should be done at the 8-10 cm height of plants for better plant growth
- Three to four hoeing practices are required to protect the crop from weeds and to get a better yield

Eradication of weeds:

- Goosefoot/lambs quarter common (bathu), broadleaf dock (jungli palak), jungle halon, and slender amaranth (chulai) weeds cause damage in February-March cultivated okra
- Okra crop cultivated in mid-March and June is mostly affected by slender amaranth (Chulai), false amaranth (Tandla), crowfoot grass (Madhana ghas), yellow nutsedge (Della), and horse pursalane (ITSIT) weeds
- For better growth of the crop, timely control of weeds should adopt
- Different control measures of weeds are given below:

i. Weed control before sowing

- Spray Pendimethalin at the rate of 1200 mL per acre 24 hours after sowing in okra field cultivated in February-march
- Similarly, May-June grown crop can be sprayed with 800 mL of Pendimethalin herbicide just 24 hours after sowing of seeds



- In the okra field, Pendimethalin is more effective as compared to dual gold herbicide

ii. Weed control after sowing

- To control the growth of the weeds in the May-June cultivated crop, after three weeks of cultivation add a shield on the ridges, and then spray can be done with 800 mL of dual gold and 600 mL of gramoxone per acre

Fertilizer recommendations

- Determine the amount of fertilizer based on the laboratory analysis of the soil
- At the time of land preparation, add 1 bag of ammonium sulfate, and 3 bags of superphosphate per acre
- At the flowering stage, apply 1 bag of ammonium sulfate and half a bag of urea per acre
- After 3ed picking of fruit, incorporate the soil with 1 bag of ammonium sulfate and half bag of urea per acre

Fertilizer recommendations for an average fertile soil

| Amount of nutrients (kg/acre) | | | Amount of fertilizers (bags/acre) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|---|
| Nitrogen N | Phosphorus P | Potash K | At sowing time |
| 26 | 35 | 25 | 1.5 bag of DAP, 1 bag of ammonium nitrate or ammonium sulfate, and 1 bag of SOP |

- In addition to the above-mentioned fertilizers, apply 15 20 kg of urea per acre after every fortnight when the crop grows large

Diseases of okra:

Damping off

- The damping-off problem induced by fungi *Pythium spp.* and *Rhizoctoniasolani L.*
- Attacks young plants before or after crop grow.
- In the first case, the seeds rot, and the growing plants die
- Plant growth stops and suddenly begin to wither
- Dark brown spots appear on the lower parts of the plant stem
- The germs of this disease are present in the soil in case of poor drainage it intensifies

Control

- This disease is spread through seeds.
- Therefore, seeds should be treated with Thiophanate methyl or Carbendazim at the rate of 2 grams per kg of seeds.
- A three-year rotation of suitable crops is essential to control disease
- For cultivation, choose the soil that has the best drainage



Okra leaf curl virus

- This viral disease is spread by whiteflies
- Before the onset of the disease, the leaf veins begin to turn yellow, which gradually turns dark yellow.
- This disease cause upward/downward curling of leaves followed by the thickening of small and main veins of leaves
- Sometimes photosynthetic material in the leaves disappears completely
- The fruit also turns yellow, and its size remains small

Control

- Cultivate resistant varieties of okra
- Whiteflies should be treated from the beginning
- The first few severely affected plants and weeds should be destroyed



Root knot nematode

- It is caused by *Meloidogyne incognita* L.
- Early onset of the disease causes the plant to shrink
- Plant leaves turn yellow completely
- To diagnose this disease, uproot the affected plant and detect the presence of nodes on the roots
- These nodes or galls can be found on any underground part of the plant

Control

- Cultivate resistant varieties of okra
- Oilseed crops should be included in the crop rotation program
- To eradicate nematodes, apply Carbofuran granular poison at the rate of 6 kg per acre

- Apply organic compost and well decomposed dung in the affected fields significantly reduce the nematode quantity



Fusarium wilt:



- It is caused by an underground fungus *Fusarium oxysporum* L.
- Water and mineral transportation in the plant is stops and its roots are rot
- The leaves on the stem of the plants dry out and the plant dies in one to two days
- It can attack the crop at any growth stage
- It also causes stunted growth and plant turning yellow

Control:

- Always use healthy, disease-free seeds
- Treat the seeds with recommended fungicides before cultivation
- Always cultivate the vegetables into a disease-free land
- Do not irrigate the healthy plant field from the water of the infected field
- Soak the okra nursery into the solution of recommended fungicide before transplantation
- Drench with Carbendazim at the rate of 10 grams per 10 liters of water around the root zone

Yellow vein mosaic disease:



- This disease is spread permanently by whitefly.
- The veins of the leaves begin to turn yellow and gradually turn dark green
- The veins and vein lets become thick and form yellowish nets on all the leaves
- Sometimes leaves are completely depleted of green material, and diseased plants could be seen from far
- The fruit also turns yellow and its size dropped

Control:

- Destroy the weeds far from okra plants
- Cultivates one of the most resistant varieties of okra
- Destroy some of the infected plants at the beginning of the disease
- To control sap-sucking insects use of insecticides is Recommended
- Use a less amount of fertilizers at an appropriate time interval to enhance the plant resistance against diseases

Okra leaf spot:



- Leaf spot in okra is caused by *Cercospora malayensis* L. and *Cercospora abelmoschi* L.
- It is a fungal disease that causes leaf defoliation
- Small moist spots start to appear on leaves which later turn yellow
- In the case of severe attacks, these spots turn to blackish brown color
- In the case of extreme heat, these spots mixed
- The plant cannot fulfill its nutritional values in a good way

Control:

- To control leaf spots, give enough space between plants while sowing
- Treat the seeds with thiram fungicide before use
- Take spray of mancozeb at the rate of 4 grams per liter or captan at the rate of 2 grams per liters of water in the okra field

Powdery mildew of okra:

- It is caused by a fungus *Erysiphe cichoracearum* L.
- White minute patches appear on the surface of older leaves that later spread to younger leaves
- In case of a severe attack, greyish powdery growth of the fungus appear on the leaves that leads to necrosis
- Diseased parts of the plant turn brown and affected leaves start drying and defoliated

Control:

- To control the spread of disease, prune the overcrowded leaves of the plant so the proper sunlight reaches the plants
- Use disease-free and resistant varieties of okra
- Intercultural practices should be followed for the control of host plants (weeds)
- Spray the field with penconazol at the rate of 10 ml per 10 liters of water for 4 times with an interval of 10 day

Pests of maize:

- Insects attack okra plant causes a significant reduction in the yield of okra
- Some of the insect pests are given below:
 - Aphid
 - Termite
 - Mealy bug
 - Jassid
 - Red mite
 - Okra fruit and shoot borer
 - Leaf miner
 - Cutworm
 - Painted bug
 - Whitefly
 - American worm

Aphid:



Damage symptoms:

- The causal organism is *Myzus persicae* L. and *Macrosiphum euphorbiae* L.
- Adult and nymph of aphid suck the sap from the lower surface of the leaves and damage it
- They excrete a sweet substance from their body that causes black fungus on the leaves and the photosynthetic activity of the leaves is severely affected
- Their attack is intense from mid-February to March
- The growth of small plants stops and they do not produce much
- High humidity and low temperature are helpful in the growth of aphid

Control:

- Always use resistant varieties of okra
- Increase the numbers of ladybird beetle in the okra field to control the aphid
- The high-pressure spray of water is done with the help of a power sprayer
- Insecticidal soaps and oil such as neem oil are the best methods to control aphid

Jassid:



Damage symptoms:

- The causal organism is *Amrasca devastans* L.
- Both adults and nymphs suck the sap from the lower surface of the leaves
- The edges of the leaves become dark yellow and later reddish
- Leaves dry out and form a cup-like shape at the top or downward
- In a severe attack, leaves begin to fall and the crop appears to be burnt

Control:

- Keep the field free from weeds
- Cultivate the resistant varieties of okra
- In case of severe attack recommended insecticides are used

Whitefly:**Damage symptoms:**

- The causal organism is *Bemisia tabaci* L.
- It is a vector that transmits viral diseases i.e., leaf curl virus, yellow vein mosaic virus
- Its moth is very small, yellowish body, and covered with white powder that's why it looks white
- Adult and nymph both suck the cell sap and weakens the plants
- Whitefly also release sweet sticky material that causes black fungus to appear on infected parts
- More susceptible to the conditions such as dry climate and high temperature
- Found in large quantities on vegetables in June and August

Control:

- Keep the field free from weeds
- Always sow the treated seeds at the recommended distance
- Spray the recommended insecticides in case of a severe attack of whitefly

Red mites:

**Damage symptoms:**

- It is caused by *Tetranychus telarius* L.
- They are very small in size, so they can be seen on the leaves only with the help of magnifying glass
- Female red mite is reddish or greenish-yellow in color
- At the beginning of the attack on the leaves, the spots of light greenish to whitish-yellow color appears on leaves and fall off
- In case of a severe attack, the whole leaf is covered with white silky nets
- Due to sucking the sap, the leaves turn upward from the edges and their color change from green to yellow and later turn brown

Control:

- It attacks in hot and dry weather if proper irrigation is provided then its attack reduce
- Always use resistant varieties of okra
- Always sow the treated seeds at the recommended distance
- In case of severe attack recommended insecticides are used

Okra fruit and shoot borer:



Damage symptoms:

- It is caused by *Earias vitella* L. and *Earias insulana* L.
- Larvae bore into the terminal shoots in the vegetative stage
- It also attacks flower buds, flowers, and young fruit during the flowering stage of okra
- Infected flowers and shoot wither, droop and dry up

Control:

- Collect and destroy infected shoots, flowers, and fruits
- Set up the light traps to destroy larvae
- Do not cultivate okra in the cotton field
- Use 20 to 30 trichogramma cards per acre and change them after discussing with agricultural experts

Mealybug:



Damage symptoms:

- Causal organism is *Pseudococcus longispinus* L.
- Female Mealybug has no feathers and its color is light reddish a larval stage
- At the young stage, a thick layer of white powder solidifies on it and become very hard
- This insect attacks in the form of colonies and suck the sap from soft branches of vegetables



- It causes the plant leaves to turn yellow, wilt, and drop

Control:

- Removed the affected plants from the field
- Ensure the destruction of weeds
- In case of severe attack recommended insecticides are used

Harvesting of okra:

- The fruit is ready to harvest after 50 to 55 days of sowing
- Small and tender fruit should be harvested every alternate day
- Fruit picking is done when the size of the fruit reaches 3 inches
- Fruit should be harvested in the early morning and evening
- Delay in harvesting may make the fruit hard and fibrous, it loses its tenderness and taste

Yield of Okra

- Okra green fruit yield varies from 15-20 tons per hectare during summer
- In the rainy season, it gives a 10-12 tons per hectare yield

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