

Horticulture Notes

Rejuvenating Okra: Producing a Spring Crop and a Bigger Fall Crop from the Same Planting

Most okra varieties are ready to pick 55 to 60 days after planting or about 4 to 6 days after flowering. Pods should be harvested when they are 2½ to 3½ inches long. Pods can be snapped off or cut off. Although cutting takes longer, you will produce a cleaner, nicer product. On average, you should produce 200 to 250 30-pound bushels of okra per acre on bare ground. Yields are considerably greater when okra is grown on polyethylene mulch.

Market price for okra typically declines sharply as the summer progresses. After the market price drops, consider topping or cutting back your okra. Cutting back okra will allow the plant to rejuvenate and produce a crop in the fall, when okra prices are generally higher. Cut plants back using a mower, leaving 6 to 8 inches of each plant above the ground. Refertilize with 15-0-14, 8-0-24, or 13-0-44 to encourage regrowth and the development of side branches. Fall yields of cutback okra will often exceed that of spring crops or the yields of a crop that is not cut back.



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For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county's name to find the number.

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