



Okra

Produced by:



THE LAND
CONNECTION

Fun Facts:

- Okra, also known as “lady’s fingers,” is related to cotton, cocoa, and hibiscus.
- It is one of the most heat- and drought-tolerant vegetable plant species in the world.

Nutrition Information:

- Raw okra is 90% water, 2% protein, 7% carbohydrates, and negligible in fat.
- Raw okra is rich in dietary fiber, vitamin C, and vitamin K. It also contains moderate amounts of thiamin, folate, and magnesium.

Preparation:

- Choose okra pods that are between 2 and 4 inches long. Longer okra can be used, but it won’t be as flavorful and can be woody.
- Run okra pods under cool water and pat dry. If the pods are fuzzy, use a damp paper towel to gently rub the skin of the pod to remove the fuzz.
- Remove the majority of the remaining stem with a knife.
- If cooking sliced okra, prevent them from getting slimy by putting the whole pods and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vinegar per pound of okra in a bowl together, making sure the okra gets coated by the vinegar. Let pods sit for 30 minutes. If cooking okra whole, frying okra, or adding okra to thicken soups, stews, or curries, this step is not necessary.

Raw: eat raw pods whole or slice and add to salads.

Sauté: after vinegar treatment, cut pods into slices or in half length-wise and sauté with other vegetables (peppers, tomato, eggplant, onion, etc.). Eat as a side or stir-fry with rice or noodles.

Fried: slice into pieces or leave whole, batter with egg and cornmeal, and lightly fry in a pan of oil until golden brown. Fried okra typically does not need to be washed in vinegar beforehand, as the slime cooks off in the oil.

Blanch: leave the pods whole (stem trimmed) and drop in a pot of boiling water. After 3-4 minutes strain out the pods and quickly drop them in a bowl of ice water to halt their cooking. Whole okra is often blanched before being sliced and added to soups or stews as a thickener.

Pickle: leave the pods whole (stem trimmed); pierce each pod 3-4 times with a fork to break the flesh; stuff mason jar with pods, garlic, and other herbs; fill jar with boiling pickling solution (vinegar, water, salt, and spices). Let cool. Cover and store in the refrigerator.

Storage:

- Place fresh okra in a paper bag, or wrap it in a paper towel and place in a perforated plastic bag. Store okra in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.
- For longer storage, okra may be frozen. Trim the stem ends, but do not cut into the pod when you trim, and then blanch (see above). Freeze whole or sliced pods in air-tight containers or freezer bags.
- For long-term storage okra pods may also be pickled (typically whole).