

You can see Okra growing Demo Garden at the vegetable garden. It grows compact. Okra came its use dates back 3,500 years. (AAS) **burgundy** okra is Gardener demonstration I went looking for this variety vegetable or for color in the green **Clemson Spineless** was



through September in the fairgrounds and the IMA 3-6 ft. tall and is fairly originally from Ethiopia and The All American Selection growing in the Master garden among red tall flowers. that could be enjoyed as a flower garden but only the available locally in late May.

Wait until the soil has warmed to plant; germination is not high, therefore use fresh seed and plant 3 seeds together 1/2 inch deep then thin to one plant every 12 inches. Have room for 6 or more plants so you will have enough pods to cook at one time. Rotate the planting site the next year to prevent buildup of plant specific diseases.



Harvest when pods are 2 - 4 inches; check for ready pods every four days or so. Before the pods form and during the season you will have beautiful hibiscus like flowers on either variety. It is of the mallow family which is hollyhock, rose of sharon and hibiscus. The burgundy okra is regarded as tasty as the popular but not colorful Simpson Spineless. The pods have a craft use as they can be used in floral table arrangements.

Okra is nutritious with vitamins and fiber and is low calorie. The fiber can help with blood sugar control, cholesterol control and eases elimination if enough is consumed.

As familiar as fried okra is it is most used as an ingredient in Gumbos; in the gumbos it gives off a viscous juice that acts as a thickener. Okra makes the gumbo thicker. As a side dish okra is used in combination with tomatoes, onions, and corn. It is used with shellfish.

The taste of okra alone is subtle, it is more the texture and look of the little slices that is nice with corn or tomatoes. In preparing you may leave the cap on and cut in 1/4 to 1/2 inches slices, or cut lengthwise for roasting. A suggestion on Pinterest was to simply steam and season with salt, pepper, and butter or use cooked and chilled in salads. Because I had only four plants I never had many pods at one time so I tried the simple steaming. You have to watch very carefully and stop cooking when barely tender before you get the mucilaginous juice, the okra slime. To me it is better in combination with other ingredients. Would I grow again, probably not. Will I grow another vegetable for the first time? Definitely