FarmLens Ltd

Website: farmlens.africa | App: app.farmlens.africa | Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya

Crop details

Okra

Abelmoschus esculentus

Family: Malvaceae

Categories

Vegetables

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Quick stats

Family	Malvaceae
Typical harvest	12.0 t/ha
Varieties	48
Pests and diseases	112
Seasons	48

Crop profile

Growth habit	annual
Days to harvest	70
Main uses	Young green pods cooked in stews and sauces, fried, boiled or sun-dried for later use.
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Okra (bamia) is widely grown in warm to hot parts of East Africa, especially in home gardens and small irrigated plots.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	22 - 30 °C
Rainfall	600 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	0 - 1800 m
Best pH	6 - 7
Soil type	Well-drained loam or sandy loam with good organic matter so Okra (bamia) can root deeply and stand well.
Row spacing	60 cm
Plant spacing	30 cm
Planting depth	2.5 cm
Seed rate	8 kg/ha

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is annual; it grows and is harvested in one season. Harvest typically starts about 70 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for young green pods cooked in stews and sauces, fried, boiled or sun-dried for later use..

Pollination: Mainly insect; healthy flowers and pollinators improve fruit set.

Where it grows: Okra (bamia) is widely grown in warm to hot parts of East Africa, especially in home gardens and small irrigated plots.. Grouped under: Vegetables.

Best climate: 22 - 30 °C; 600 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 1800 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 7; well-drained loam or sandy loam with good organic matter so okra (bamia) can root deeply and stand well..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Sow Okra (bamia) directly in the field when soil is warm. Put 2–3 seeds per hole, thin to one strong plant later. Plant slightly deeper in very light soils and a bit shallower in heavy soils.
Transplanting	Okra can be transplanted from small pots or trays, but direct seeding is more common to avoid root damage.
Irrigation	Keep soil moist during germination and early growth. Later, avoid long dry spells at flowering and pod filling. Do not over-irrigate on heavy soils.
Fertigation	Under drip, apply small and frequent doses of NPK. Reduce nitrogen rates once Okra (bamia) is flowering heavily to avoid too much leafy growth at the expense of pods.
Pest scouting	Check Okra twice a week for aphids, whiteflies, fruit borers and leaf spots. Look at the buds, flowers, young pods and underside of leaves.
Pruning and training	Normally no pruning is needed. Remove heavily damaged leaves and keep the field clean. Stake plants only where wind damage is high.
Harvest	Harvest young tender pods every 2–3 days. Pods should be soft and cut easily with a fingernail. Over-mature pods become hard and reduce further production.
Postharvest	Handle Okra (bamia) gently to avoid bruising. Keep in shade, avoid wetting pods too much and transport to market as soon as possible.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal at planting	0	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	120 kg/ha	N: 20, P?O?: 20, K?O: 20	Place fertilizer in a small band beside the Okra (bamia) row and cover with soil before sowing.
1	Basal at planting	0	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	120 kg/ha	N: 20, P?O?: 20, K?O: 20	Place fertilizer in a small band beside the Okra (bamia) row and cover with soil before sowing.
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2	Early topdress	21	CAN 26% N	80 kg/ha	N: 21, P?O?: 0, K?O: 0	Apply along the row on moist soil and lightly incorporate.
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3	Topdress at flowering	40	Urea 46% N or CAN	50 kg/ha	N: 23, P?O?: 0, K?O: 0	Apply just before heavy flowering and first pod pickings.
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Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
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N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
N	Basal	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
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N	Basal	30	kg/ha
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P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
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N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
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N	Basal	30	kg/ha
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P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha
N	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Clemson Spineless type	KE	55	Spineless or soft-spined pods, good yield and popular in markets.
Local green Okra (bamia)	KE	60	Traditional type, good taste and tolerant under low inputs.
Red Okra selection	TZ	60	Red pods, attractive in mixed bunches, good for niche markets.
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Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	120	Provides balanced nutrients for early Okra (bamia) growth.

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Topdress (N source)	CAN 26% N or urea	80	One or two applications depending on crop vigour and rainfall.
Organic	Well-rotted manure or compost	8000	Apply and incorporate before planting to improve soil structure and water holding.
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Topdress (N source)	CAN 26% N or urea	80	One or two applications depending on crop vigour and rainfall.
Organic	Well-rotted manure or compost	8000	Apply and incorporate before planting to improve soil structure and water holding.
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	120	Provides balanced nutrients for early Okra (bamia) growth.
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Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Aphids	pest	Small green or black insects on Okra (bamia) buds and young shoots, causing curled leaves and sticky honeydew.	Avoid over-fertilising with nitrogen, conserve natural enemies and use selective insecticides/biopesticides when populations build up.
Whiteflies	pest	Tiny white insects on the underside of leaves, causing yellowing and sooty mould on Okra leaves and pods.	Monitor regularly, remove heavily infested leaves and use recommended insecticides when necessary.
Fruit and shoot borers	pest	Entry holes and frass on pods and sometimes in young shoots; damaged pods become bent or rotted.	Remove and destroy infested pods, avoid leaving volunteers in the field and spray targeted insecticides based on threshold.
Spider mites	pest	Fine speckling and bronzing of leaves, with fine webbing in hot, dry periods.	Maintain some humidity, avoid dusty conditions and use recommended miticides or biopesticides if severe.
Powdery mildew	disease	White powdery growth on Okra leaves, leading to yellowing and early leaf drop.	Improve airflow, avoid excessive nitrogen and apply suitable fungicides when needed.
Leaf spots and blights	disease	Brown to dark spots on leaves and sometimes pods, which may join and cause drying of leaf tissue.	Rotate crops, avoid overhead irrigation late in the day and remove badly affected leaves.
Root and stem rots	disease	Wilting, yellowing and rotting at the base of Okra (bamia) stems, especially in waterlogged areas.	Plant on raised beds, ensure good drainage and avoid overwatering.
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Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
Backyard / low-input Okra (bamia)	6	3	8	Some manure, little fertilizer and irregular harvesting.
Open-field Okra with good management	12	8	16	Improved variety, recommended fertilizer, regular picking and pest control.
Irrigated / high-input Okra (bamia)	18	12	25	Drip irrigation, fertigation and careful pest and disease management.
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Open-field Okra with good management	12	8	16	Improved variety, recommended fertilizer, regular picking and pest control.
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Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Warm lowland Okra (bamia) areas	Onset of rains or any time with irrigation	First harvest around 7–8 weeks after planting, then frequent pickings.

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Peri-urban irrigated belts	Most of the year when temperatures are warm	Extended picking period with regular harvests.
TZ	Coastal and lake basin Okra zones	Warm, wet periods and under irrigation	Multiple harvests over 6–10 weeks.
KE	Warm lowland Okra (bamia) areas	Onset of rains or any time with irrigation	First harvest around 7–8 weeks after planting, then frequent pickings.
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Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Peri-urban irrigated Okra (bamia) areas	High
KE	Warm lowlands and mid-altitude vegetable zones	High
TZ	Coastal belt and lake basin	High
UG	Warm lowland smallholder vegetable zones	High

Source: **FarmLens Ltd** - farmlens.africa and app.farmlens.africa. Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya. This guide was generated from the FarmLens database.