



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

Okra

In season:



Summer

Preschool Lesson Plan

Objectives

Participants will:

- identify okra as a vegetable and the part of the plant that okra comes from.
- increase knowledge in the selection, storage and use of okra.
- demonstrate use of okra in a recipe.

Items Needed for the Lesson

- MyPlate poster
- Parts of a Plant visual
- Okra visuals
- Actual okra if possible

Handouts or Take Home Items

- Pick It! Try It! Like It! Preserve It! fact sheet
- Coloring Sheet

Recipe

- Okra with Corn and Tomatoes

Cooking and Food Safety Skill Sheets

- Handwashing
- Knife Safety and Cutting Boards
- Washing Fruits and Vegetables
- Measuring Liquid and Dry Ingredients
- Stove Top Safety

Other Cooking and Food Safety Skills

- Kitchen terms - dice and simmer

Supplies for Okra Lesson

- Okra with Corn and Tomatoes
 - » Measuring spoons
 - » Measuring cups
 - » Knife
 - » Cutting board
 - » Liquid measuring cup
 - » Stove or skillet
 - » Spoon

What You Say:	What You Do:
<p>Every class we're going to learn about a different fruit or vegetable. I'm going to give you some clues and I want you to try to think of what it is. After each clue, raise your hand if you think you know what it is.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It grows naturally on the banks of the Nile River. • It has five or more ridges running down its length. • Thomas Jefferson grew this in his garden in the 1700s. • It is often called "lady's fingers". <p>(Answer: Okra.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name off each clue, allow a few guesses before moving on to the next clue. • After someone guesses the answer, or you tell them, show them visuals of an okra.
<p>Half of our plate should be fruits and vegetables. Preschool-aged children should be eating 1 cup of fruits and vegetables each, every day.</p> <p>Kindergarteners should be eating 1 ½ cups of fruits and vegetables each, every day.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point to the MyPlate poster.
<p>Okra is a unique vegetable that belongs to the same family as hollyhock and hibiscus, which are flowers.</p> <p>Have any of you seen okra before?</p> <p>Okra is a green seed pod that can be eaten. It has a fuzzy texture on the outside and has ridges that run down the length of the pod. It has a sticky center that produces a juice that will thicken soups or stews.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow discussion about okra. • Show a visual of okra or if possible, show an actual okra seed pod pointing out the fuzzy texture and ridges.
<p>In some parts of the world okra is called gumbo or "lady's fingers".</p> <p>Okra is grown in warm places such as Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. It is also grown in the southern parts of the United States.</p> <p>Okra plants can grow 3-6 feet or more in height!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare the height of an okra plant to the height of some of the participants.
<p>Have you ever eaten okra before?</p> <p>What does it taste like?</p> <p>Okra has a mild taste, similar to an eggplant.</p> <p>How can okra be prepared?</p> <p>(Answers: Raw, pickled, roasted, fried, steamed, microwaved, sautéed, microwaved, steamed, in soups, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow discussion. • Call on someone who would like to answer.

What You Say:	What You Do:
<p>The juice that okra contains is a thickener. It is often used in making gumbo dishes.</p> <p>Okra goes well with tomatoes, onions, corn, squash and fish.</p> <p>The most common ways okra is served is breaded and fried or in gumbo.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, show the inside of an okra pod, pointing out the sticky juice.
<p>What should we look for when buying okra at the grocery store?</p> <p>Choose bright green okra that is crisp and firm. Look for pods that are 2-4 inches long. Larger pods may be tough and taste stringy.</p> <p>Do not purchase pods that are soft or turning brown or that are dull looking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a ruler to show the length okra should be.
<p>Okra can be stored in the refrigerator in a plastic bag that is not closed tight. It can only be stored for two to three days before it starts to go bad.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how to loosely close the plastic bag for storage.
<p>What do we need to do before we cook the okra? (Answer: Wash it.)</p> <p>Wash okra pods with cool water. The stem end can then be cut off.</p> <p>Small pods can be left whole when cooking. Larger pods can be cut into slices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on someone who would like to answer. • Review Washing Fruits and Vegetables skill sheet.
<p>Okra can also be frozen for it to last longer.</p>	
<p>Okra is a good source of fiber and vitamin K. Fiber keeps our tummies healthy and vitamin K helps our blood stay healthy.</p>	
<p>Are you ready to try a recipe using okra?</p> <p>What is the first thing we need to do before preparing food? (Answer: Wash our hands.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Handwashing skill sheet.

Use this page if you are going to prepare Okra with Corn and Tomatoes

Equipment List

- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cups
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Liquid measuring cup
- Stove or skillet
- Spoon

What You Say:	What You Do:
Today we will be making okra with corn and tomatoes. Let's read the recipe together before we begin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the recipe with the participants.
How many vegetables do we have in this recipe? (Answer: 5 – Onion, pepper, tomato, corn and okra.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on someone who would like to answer.
We will be slicing, dicing and chopping the vegetables. We will be using a knife and cutting board to do this. What are some things we need to remember about knives and cutting boards? What do we need to do before we slice, dice and chop the vegetables? (Answer: Wash them.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Knife Safety and Cutting Boards skill sheet. • Go over Washing Fruits and Vegetables skill sheet with participants.
What does the cooking term "dice" mean? (Answer: To cut food in small cubes.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on someone who would like to answer.
After heating the oil, we are going to add ingredients in the order given, following the directions for each step. We will be measuring water. What kind of measuring cup should we use to do this? (Answer: A liquid measuring cup.) The mixture is going to simmer for 15 minutes before adding the corn. What does the cooking term "simmer" mean? (Answer: To cook slowly in liquid over low heat. The surface of the liquid will have small bubbles on it.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Measuring Liquid and Dry Ingredients skill sheet. • Go over Stove Top Safety skill sheet.

Visuals



Okra flower and small seed pod



Okra that is ready to be harvested



The inside of okra

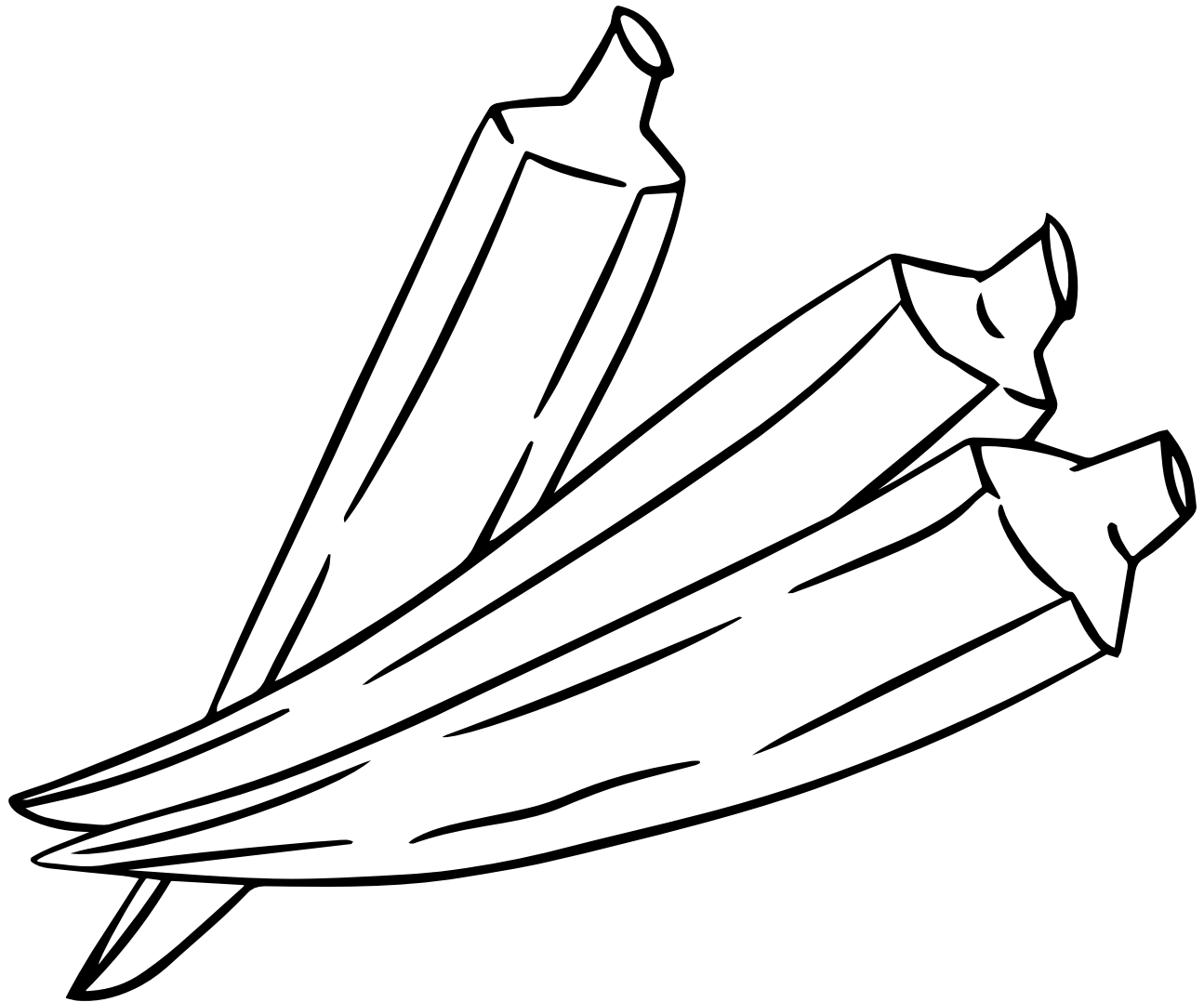
Okra Nutrition Information

Type	Serving Size/Weight in grams	Calories	Fiber (g)	Vitamin A (International Units)	Vitamin C (mg)	Potassium (mg)	Folate (mcg)
Okra, cooked	½ cup 50g	16	1.6	1	11	152	44
Daily Recommendations RDA=Recommended daily allowance AI=Adequate intake	1-4 cup servings of vegetables per day depending on age	Varies according to age and activity level	AI (depending on age) ranges from 14-33.6 g	Daily Value based on a 2,000 calorie per day diet	RDA (depending on age) ranges from 25-90 mg	AI (depending on age) ranges from 3,000-4,700 mg)	RDA (depending on age) ranges from 150-400 mcg)



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

OKRA



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program--SNAP.

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Learn more at extension.sdstate.edu.

© 2024, South Dakota Board of Regents

Okra Sources

Recipe

- myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/lite-fried-okra
- healthysd.gov/fruit-of-the-month-okra/

Clues

- onlyfoods.net/okra-ladys-finger.html

Information

- extension.illinois.edu/veggies/okra.cfm
- eatfresh.org/discover-foods/okra
- cleveland.ces.ncsu.edu
- fruitsandveggies.org/

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program–SNAP.

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Learn more at extension.sdstate.edu.

© 2024, South Dakota Board of Regents

S-0001-24



SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

Okra

In season:



Summer

Pick it!

Fresh okra should be firm and brightly colored.

It can be stored, unwashed, in perforated plastic in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

Once the ridges and tip start to turn dark, it should be discarded.



Try it!

Okra is most popularly prepared as gumbo, a Louisiana Creole dish. The juices in the okra help to thicken the sauce of the dish.

To make a light version of fried okra, slice the okra and season with some salt and pepper. Heat a frying pan over medium heat and coat with cooking spray and add okra. Turn okra in pan often with spoon or spatula, and cook until browned, about 10 minutes.

Serve with hot sauce or your favorite relish.

Okra also goes well with tomatoes, onions, corn, shellfish and fish stock.



Types of Okra

Clemson spineless: Most commonly grown in U.S., has ridges, straight and tapered pods

Burgundy: Only a few varieties with red/burgundy pods; plants may grow up to 4 feet tall



Did you know...

Thiamin is also known as vitamin B1. It helps the body change carbohydrates into energy and ensures proper heart, muscle and nervous system functions.

Like it!

Lite Fried Okra

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh okra, sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon pepper
- Cooking spray (nonstick as needed)

Directions

1. In a bowl, mix sliced okra, oil, salt and pepper.
2. Coat a large frying with cooking spray. Heat over medium heat.
3. Add okra mixture, and cook until brown, about 10 minutes, turning okra over often with spatula.
4. Serve with hot sauce or favorite relish.

Yields 4 servings

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

Total Calories 24; Total Fat 1g, Saturated Fat 0g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 79mg; Carbohydrates 4g, Dietary Fiber 4g, Total Sugars 1g, Added Sugars included 0g; Protein 1g

Source: myplate.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/lite-fried-okra

**Find more recipes
and videos at
extension.sdstate.edu**

Okra with Corn and Tomatoes

Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 2 bay leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon each of thyme, red pepper flakes, basil
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 3 large fresh ripe tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- About 2 cups corn—fresh, frozen or canned
- 2 cups small (2 inch pods) okra pods, whole or in $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick rounds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water or chicken stock
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper

Directions

1. In a 10-inch iron skillet or heavy pan, heat olive oil, and add onions, bay leaves, thyme, basil and red pepper flakes.
2. Sauté and stir until onions are limp, add bell pepper, and continue cooking until onions are translucent.
3. Add tomatoes, okra, water, salt and pepper.
4. Reduce heat to low, and simmer uncovered for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. Add corn and cook 5 minutes longer.
6. Taste, adjust seasoning if needed. Serve hot on a bed of rice or pasta, if desired.

Yields 6 servings

Nutrition Facts per Serving:

Calories 130; Fat 5g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 310mg; Carbohydrates 18g; Sugar 6g; Fiber 4g; Protein 3g

This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—SNAP.

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture. Learn more at extension.sdstate.edu.

S-0001-24

© 2024, South Dakota Board of Regents