

Cajun Jewel

OKRA *Abelmoschus esculentus*

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A drought tolerant native of northeastern Africa, related to cotton and hibiscus.

Culture: Direct sow once the soil averages 70°F (3–4 weeks after last frost). For earlier okra, it is possible, but not recommended, to transplant out 2–3 week old seedlings grown in pots indoors. Handle gently to avoid damaging the tender roots. To speed germination, soak the seeds overnight in water, or abrade *lightly* with sandpaper. Provide rich, well-drained soil, and even moisture. Excess nitrogen may cause poor yields.

Harvest: Pods of most varieties are tender at 2–4 in., except as noted. Length when tender may vary over the season. Use hand pruners to snip off the pods. Cover up arms and legs to protect from the irritating, prickly leaves.

Seed Savers: To save seeds for home planting, isolate from other okra by at least ½ mile.

Soil
Temp.
70–95°F

Sowing
Depth
½–¾"

Final Plant
Spacing
12–18"

Final Row
Spacing
48–72"

Light
Full Sun

Days to
Emerge
7–10

