

Sharda – New variety of okra

The okra or lady's finger (*Abelmoschus esculantus* (L.) Moench) is a gift from African continent to the people of other parts of the world. There are altogether 38 species of genus *Abelmoschus* under family - Malvaceae. It is an important vegetable crop grown in summer and rainy season but in coastal region of Maharashtra, it is grown throughout the year. Okra is rich source of vitamins, minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, iodine and dietary fiber too. Tender green fruits are fried to prepare Bhujia and cooked in curry, soups and stews which are its also popular dishes. The fruits also help in case of renal colic, goiter, leucorrhoea and general anemia especially in poor women.

DUE to massive okra improvement programme going on at several Research Institutes and SAU's in India, over two dozen HYV's of this vegetable, have been developed and released for commercial cultivation. Owing to this systematic research programme, India has bagged first position in okra production in world. It produces 5,784 thousand tonnes which is 72% of total okra production of world. Although many varieties of green colour of okra have been developed but red / scarlet red colour varieties are few. Another challenge in okra cultivation is yellow vein mosaic disease which reduces the yield up to 90-95% in severe attack. Fruits of Sharda variety of okra are scarlet red colour and crop is field resistant to yellow vein mosaic disease. Its yielding ability is 200-215 q/ha under intensive cultivation.

After continuous several years of mutation breeding programme to develop a HYV of scarlet red colour okra, AKS University has given a gift of scarlet red colour variety of okra to the farmers of Vindhya region of Satna during November 2019.

Fruits of Sharda variety of okra are 24-25 cm long having five ridges and have good cooking quality as compared to green colour varieties. Commercial cultivation of this variety will improve the economic conditions of vegetable growers of Madhya Pradesh and India too.



This variety is named after name of Maa Goddess – Sharda of Maihar (Madhya Pradesh).

The data on growth and yield parameters of 10 varieties of okra presented in Table 1 revealed that variety Sharda is the most promising variety with an yield of 215 q/ha. Its fruit are longer (24.50 cm) than other varieties and scarlet red in colour. Regular consumption of this variety will check anemia and goiter disease in poor women. Organoleptic test conducted on above varieties showed that variety Sharda is more tasty as compared to rest of the varieties. Sharda variety of okra attracts consumers in the market due to its longer length of fruits and attractive colour.

Agro-technique for growing Sharda:

1. Time of sowing:
 - ♦ In summer – Middle of February.
 - ♦ In rainy season – Middle of June.
2. Land requirement – Sandy loam soil most suitable.
3. Land preparations – 3 ploughings followed by planking.
4. Manure – Well rotten FYM/ha - 200 q/ha.
5. Fertilizers–

- ♦ Single super phosphate – 350 kg/ha
- ♦ Muriate of Potash – 125 kg/ha
- ♦ Urea – 137 kg/ha

N.B. – Total FYM, Single Super Phosphate and Muriate of Potash will be applied at the time of field



Healthy crop of Okra variety Sharda



Single plant of Okra Variety Sharda

Table 1. Growth and yield parameters of different varieties of okra in agro-climatic condition of Satna (MP)

Varieties	Plant height (cm)	Number of branches / plant	Days to 50% flowering	Fruit colour	Fruit length (cm)	Fruit diameter (cm)	Yield (q / ha)
Pusa Sawani	99.50	3.40	46	Light green	14.50	1.90	140.26
Parbhani Kranti	118.00	4.00	45	Light green	15.80	2.15	180.75
Pnjab Padmini	122.45	3.25	35	Medium green	16.25	2.25	178.36
Varsha Uphar	92.75	3.50	38	Dark green	17.55	2.20	181.00
Arka Anamika	124.80	3.25	44	Light green	18.00	2.30	190.00
Arka Abhay	123.25	3.16	41	Dark green	20.15	2.25	185.50
Co-1	115.00	3.00	42	Scarlet red	22.50	2.25	186.20
Pusa Makhmali	91.80	3.00	40	Medium green	12.00	1.85	138.80
Hisar Naveen	121.00	2.50	37	Light green	15.00	2.28	177.95
Sharda	135.00	3.75	42	Scarlet red	24.50	2.48	215.55

preparation however, urea will be applied in two split doses at 25 and 40 days after sowing of crop.

6. Seed rate –

- ◆ For summer season crop 18-20 kg/ha
- ◆ For rainy season crop 10-12 kg/ha.

7. Spacing –

- ◆ For summer season crop – 60 cm × 25 cm
- ◆ For rainy season crop – 75 cm × 30 cm

8. Irrigation – Irrigate the crop after every second or third day in summer only.

9. Yield -

- ◆ Summer Season Crop – 125 q/ha
- ◆ Rainy season Crop – 200 q/ha

10. Seed yield – From rainy season crop only 12 q/ha

For further interaction, please write to:

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