

Effect of harvesting frequency on yield of two open pollinated (OP) varieties of okra

Objective

To determine the most appropriate harvesting frequency of okra.

Methods and materials

Test location: Mama Clementina Foundation Production Farm (Weruweru Farm), in Weruweru, Hai District of Kilimanjaro, Tanzania.
 Bimodal rain pattern: Oct – Dec and March – June, approx. 1 200 mm annually.
 Mean minimum temperature at night is 15°C to 17°C and mean maximum temperature ranges from 25°C to 33°C depending on season.

Sowing date: 16 November 2016

First harvest: 11 January 2017

Design: Factorial with 4 replications.

Treatments: Harvesting frequency:
 Once, twice and three times a week

Varieties: Pusa Sawani (OP)
 Clemson Spineless (OP)

Seeds were directly sown in beds 6m long 1m wide. Plant spacing was 50 cm x 30 cm. Drip irrigation was used. 83 kg P₂O₅/ha was applied as basal fertilizer using DAP. Nitrogen (221 kg/ha) and potassium (150 kg/ha) were applied as Urea& CAN and MOP respectively in split applications at weekly intervals up to 7 weeks after planting.

Note: The conclusion is based on one test only done at Hai (997m ASL) and might be different in other areas.

Results

Highest marketable yields came from harvesting two or three times a week. There were no varietal differences. There was also no interaction.



Effect of harvesting frequency on marketable yield of okra in t/ha

Variety	Harvesting frequency			Mean
	Once a week	Twice a week	Thrice a week	
Clemson Spineless	5.9	9.1	9.3	8.1
Pusa Sawani	3.4	7.6	7.7	6.2
Mean	4.7	8.3	8.5	
I.s.d Harvest frequency=	2.6			
I.s.d Variety=	2.1			
I.s.d Interaction =	3.7			
P-Value Harvest frequency=	0.09			
P-Value Variety=	0.08			
P-Value Interaction=	0.9			

I.s.d. – Least significant difference 5%

Conclusions and recommendations

Harvesting two or three times a week gives a higher marketable yield. Choice of harvesting frequency will depend on available labour, market and/or storage facility availability.