Okra Cultivation in India

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Why in News?

In 2024–25, Gujarat has emerged as the country's leading producer of okra.

- **Okra –** It is also known as lady's finger, Bhendi, or Bhindi, is one of the most widely consumed vegetables in India.
- **Scientific name –** Abelmoschus esculentus.
- **Family –** It is an annual plant that belongs to the family Malvaceae, with origins traced to Ethiopia.
- Okra is a rich source of vitamins, protein, calcium and other minerals.
- **Climate –** It thrives in ***warm, tropical, subtropical climates***, needing warm, humid conditions with temperatures 20-35°C and avoiding frost.
- **Soil –** The ideal soil for cultivation is ***sandy loam to clay loam*** with rich organic matter and better drainage facilities.
- **Harvesting –** It was done within 60–70 days after sowing; tender fruits were picked regularly.
- **Diseases –** Yellow Vein Mosaic Virus (YVMV) is a main threat, spread by whiteflies; use resistant varieties.
- **Pests –** The common pests include fruit borer, jassids, aphids, and whiteflies.
- **Popular Varieties –** Arka Anamika, Pusa Sawani, Varsha Uphar, Parbhani Kranti.
- **Production –** India is the largest producer of okra, accounting for nearly 70% of global production.
- **Top producing states –** Gujarat is the leading producing state, followed by Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh.

  Gujarat is at the top in both terms of area under okra cultivation and overall production. The Saurashtra–Kutch region accounted for nearly 15% of the cultivated area and about 13% of total production.

- **Global okra production –** Led by India, followed by Nigeria, Mali, Sudan, and Bangladesh.

Quick Facts

Gujarat's horticulture Output

• **Horticulture** drives Gujarat's farm growth and contributed ***7.66% of India's vegetable*** output in 2024–25.
• Nearly 20% of Gujarat's farmland grows horticulture, with Saurashtra–Kutch yielding 47.91 lakh tonnes of output.
• **Policy Support –** Several State incentive schemes along with Centrally Sponsored Schemes - Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) and the National Horticulture Mission (NHM).
• **Focus –** Area-based cluster farming, protected cultivation, cold-chain & storage, quality planting material, and farmer training.

References

1. The Hindu | Gujarat tops in okra production
2. Apni Kheti | Okra
3. Desi Kheti | Okra Production

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