

Dr. Mehmet Öztan is a Turkish seed keeper/grower, farmer, and co-owner of [Two Seeds in a Pod](#). He previously farmed in the Tampa Bay region and currently farms on his six-acre farm located in Reedsville, West Virginia. The farm is a learning space and a gateway to exploring more than fifty food crops for their cultural significance, culinary uses, climate adaptability and significance related to seed and food justice as well as a space in which he builds relations with plants and their original stewards. Dr. Öztan is also the founder of the [Anatolian Seeds Recovery and Preservation \(ANATOHUM\) Project](#) that aims to re-vitalize, preserve, document, and promote the traditional seeds of Türkiye. The project is the backbone of Two Seeds in a Pod. Through the company's seed catalog and as a result of his work on ANATOHUM Project, Dr. Öztan has introduced more than 120 open-pollinated seed varieties to the American seed market for home gardeners, small farmers and chefs to grow and cook with.

As a minoritized seed industry professional, Dr. Öztan continuously thinks, writes and creates around issues of racism, favoritism, grief and extractive labor practices in American seed industry. He is the creator and organizer of [Seedy Talks](#), a widely known speaker series that focuses on environmental, food and health justice, seed and food sovereignty, local economies, food story telling, and food and farm traditions of underrepresented minoritized communities. He is also the author of [Prospective Seed Grower's Manual](#), the only publicly available, comprehensive document that provides guidelines for beginner-level commercial seed growers.

Dr. Öztan holds a Ph.D. in civil engineering from Michigan State University and is currently a Service Assistant Professor in Eberly College of Arts & Sciences at West Virginia University.