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Roger Beachy, Ph.D., is founding president of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, he was responsible for setting the scientific mission of the Center. Beachy is recognized for his work in molecular virology, gene expression and in particular for development of transgenic plants that are resistant to virus infection. Current research in his group includes: studies of mechanisms of transgenic virus resistance in model plants as well in crop plants, including rice and sweet potato; characterizing functional activities of transcription factors; and developing a chemical gene switching system for use in plants.

Beachy held academic positions at Washington University, St. Louis, and The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, California, where he was co-founder of the International Laboratory for Tropical Agricultural Biotechnology. He is a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology, and a Foreign Fellow of the National Academy of Sciences of India and the Indian National Science Academy, among others. A few of his awards include the Wolf Prize in Agriculture, the D. Robert Hoagland Award from the Society of Plant Biologists and Ruth Allen Award from the American Phytopathological Society.