

Li Yang, Assistant Professor of Plant Pathology at the Athens Campus, will focus his research on the mechanisms by which model and non-model plants coordinate development and defense. His Ph.D. in Genetics at the University of Pennsylvania investigated the regulation of plant aging in relation to the temporal expression of microRNAs. Subsequently, Yang completed postdoctoral training with Jeff Dangl at the University of North Carolina (UNC), Chapel Hill, where he studied how virulence effectors from evolutionarily divergent pathogens (ascomycete, oomycete and eubacteria) modulate a convergent host transcription factor to fine-tune hormonal signaling in immune response. His work at UNC was partially supported by the Life Sciences Research Foundation through a Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation fellowship.