Dr. Dickson Despommier, PhD, is a microbiologist, an ecologist, and emeritus professor of Public and Environmental Health at the Columbia University and Adjunct Professor at Fordham University. Dr. Despommier has 28 years experience in conducting laboratory-based biomedical research. He is interested in ecological process and the damage caused to the environment by encroachment (mostly to make room for farmland). At present, he is engaged in a project whose mission is to produce significant amounts of food crops in tall buildings situated in densely populated urban centers (www.verticalfarm.com).

Dr. Despommier has been selected Teacher of the Year 8 times at Columbia University Medical School, and in 2003, won the national American Medical Student Golden Apple Award for Teaching Excellence. He has authored five books, written over 70 peer-reviewed scientific papers and published numerous review articles on a wide variety of scientific subjects. Dr. Despommier has also lectured on the concept of vertical farming at many leading US universities, national and international city governments, institutions and organisations and federal government agencies as well as TED and TEDx presentations. He has been featured in numerous newspapers, magazines and journals and taken part in radio, TV, and newspaper interviews both in the U.S.A., Canada, Europe, China and India.