

Marcello Mele grew up in La Spezia, a little town on the Ligurian coast in the north of Italy. Even though he had the sea right on his doorstep, he always felt a pull toward the countryside. After finishing high school, he packed his bags for Pisa, where he studied Agricultural Sciences, diving deep into livestock farming. His passion for animals didn't stop there — he kept going and earned a Ph.D. in Animal Science at the University of Perugia.

Today, he's a full professor of Animal Science at the Department of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences at the University of Pisa. At the beginning of his career, he's focused on different aspects of milk and meat quality, especially genetic and nutritional factors that affect fatty acid composition. Lately, he's been diving into rumen metabolism and feeding strategies aimed at improving the efficiency and the environmental footprint of cattle and sheep farming.

About thirteen years ago, Marcello got into agroforestry systems working in a collaborative project with EMBRAPA Gado do Corte in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. Now he's involved in several national and international research projects on that topic, to push this idea forward and to coupling agroforestry system with precision livestock farming approaches.

He's not just a guy stuck in the lab or the lecture hall, either. Marcello's always out in the field, working side by side with farmers, cooperatives, feeding companies and producer consortia, helping them bring new ideas and technologies. He's also taken on a bunch of leadership roles at his university, including running the "Enrico Avanzi" Agri-Environmental Research Centre for four years, leading the Department of Agricultural, Food and Agro-Environmental Sciences for another four, serving as a university senator, and now sitting on the Board of Directors at the University of Pisa. He is also Ordinary member of the "Accademia dei Georgofili", founded in Florence in 1753, the oldest institution in the world of its kind dedicated to agriculture, the environment, and food.

On top of all that, he's super proud to have been the editor-in-chief of the *Italian Journal of Animal Science* for the past eight years.

When he's not caught up in research, teaching, or leading projects, Marcello knows exactly how to recharge. He loves heading into the mountains with his wife Arianna, their daughter Ginevra, and their giant (but very sweet) 45-kilo dog, Julius, spending long days trekking through nature. Back home, his perfect evening is all about good vibes: a favourite jazz or blues record playing in the background, a glass of good red wine, and a crime novel so gripping it's impossible to put down.