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AGRIFOOD JUSTICE IN TERRITORIAL FOOD SYSTEMS

**NEW PRODUCTION MODEL IN CORPORATE CATERING: TENSIONS
BETWEEN RELOCALISATION, INDUSTRIALISATION AND WORK ON
AGRIFOOD TRANSITIONS**

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Current debates on territorial agrifood transitions increasingly question the assumption that relocalisation inherently fosters sustainability. While public policies commit socio-economic actors to integrating such goals and have become a policy and managerial mantra, their concrete implications for work, organizational forms within food systems remain underexplored. This communication analyses this issue through intervention-research conducted within a multinational corporate catering company. Since late 2024, the company has been deploying a New Production Model (NPM) combining upstream off-site production with downstream on-site preparation (initially dedicated solely to the business sector and Paris region). Two newly created Food Processing Facilities

perform washing, peeling, preparation of base sauces, and (pre-)cooking. Semi-processed products are delivered in 1.5-kg pouches with shelf lives ranging from 7 to 21 days, while final cooking, seasoning, and plating remain on restaurant sites. Currently, 30-40% of restaurant supplies originate from these facilities, reconfiguring procurement processes, work organization, and daily activities. Based on interviews (with project designers, managers, chefs and service staff) and on-site observations, the research examines how the NPM reshapes work, skill requirements, collaboration, autonomy, and the perceived meaning of work. Its deployment was conditioned by several criteria: acceptance by Regional Operations Directors and clients, site-specific constraints, and its capacity to reduce on-site staffing in response to labour shortages and rising wage costs. To secure the occupancy rates necessary for facility profitability, where these conditions were not met, the company redirected the NPM toward other market segments or regions raising questions about the limits of relocalisation and the balance between centralization and territorial proximity. While promoted as a lever for relocalisation, quality, and ecological transition, the NPM reveals both sustainability opportunities and new social, economic and environmental tensions. These findings contribute to broader debates on the conditions under which organizational innovations can support genuinely ecological and socially just agrifood transitions.

Palavras-chave: work; organizational change; corporate catering; relocalisation; industrialization; agrifood transitions.