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**QUALITY COFFEE IN RURAL MULTIFUNCTIONALITY AND AGRITOURISM
IN NORTHWEST RIO DE JANEIRO STATE**

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Contemporary rural space has been understood from its multiple functions beyond the productivist dimension an agricultural economy. The quality turn of rural products and the association between agriculture and tourism, with the valorisation of rural property as a space for landscape contemplation and leisure, can be examples of ongoing processes within the framework of rural multifunctionality. This study focuses on understanding rural changes in the regional context of the Northwest of Rio de Janeiro State, more precisely, in the municipality of Varre-Sai, where agriculture plays a fundamental role in the regional economy, especially through coffee cultivation. Changes in coffee cropping and processing techniques are observed, which, in addition to increased productivity, have re-qualified the region, traditionally a producer of inferior coffees, to producing fine coffees. Coffee farming is undertaken by small family-based establishments. The farmers have also taken on tourism circuits

and gastronomic activities. To understand the changes underway, the research involved visits to rural properties producing differentiated quality coffees in Varre-Sai and conducted interviews with both farmers and professionals who are monitoring the quality shift in coffee farming and the establishment of agritourism in the region. The study emphasizes that quality coffee farming associated with agritourism can involve innovation and be a force that should not be underestimated in promoting rural development in the Northwest Rio de Janeiro State.

Palavras-chave: quality coffee; family farmers; agritourism; rural multifunctionality; northwest of rio de janeiro state.