



**Jose Hiroiti
Okuyama, Fazenda
Pedro Leão**

**Cerrado Mineiro,
Campos Altos, Brazil**

Partner since: 2021

Traceable to: Single Estate

Altitude: 1,100 - 1,200

Varietals: Red Catuaí, Yellow Catuai, Mundo Novo, Topázio, Rubi, Paraíso, and Bourbon

Processing: Cherries are harvested according to varietal and cup potential, as determined by an annual harvest plan, then floated, washed and dried on patios for 3-8 days before finishing at low heats in a mechanical dryer

Harvest: July August September

Booking: November December

Arrivals: January February



(Provided by supplier, who is a member of the Aequitas network)

'The story begins with the family tradition passed from father to son in the cultivation and care of the land, through subsistence agriculture on a small property with about 20 hectares (ha), located in the municipality of Santa Mariana, in the north of the state of Paraná.

Mr. Kotaro Okuyama discovered the ruby grape cultivar, and is still recognized to-date for this accomplishment, including having the genus named after him – “Uva Ruby Okuyama”. Today, this fact remains in history as one of the 100 contributions of Japanese immigrants and their descendants to Brazil.

This was 1974, a period in which the country faced a process of economic slowdown, decline in exports and decline in coffee production, as a result of soil depletion and climatic imbalances; José Hiroiti Okuyama, eldest son of Mr. Kotaro, taking with him the tradition passed on by his parents, was selected to participate in a pioneering program named the Program for Directed Settlement of Alto Paranaíba – PADAP. For this project, the cooperative (CAC-CC) was responsible for the selection of high technical level settlers, as well as for the support in the areas of production, commercialization and financing, with José Hiroiti Okuyama being the third settler to settle in the areas of the PADAP , acquiring its first property, a land called Lote 34 PADAP. At the time they started a totally traditional production of coffee, soybeans and rice, facing several challenges, among them the lack of adequate

technology for planting in the cerrado region, and no information as to what crops are suitable for this soil.

But they learned, and more than forty years after the implementation of the project, the business grew to have more than 10 different units in the Alto Paranaíba region, state of Minas Gerais, in the municipalities of São Gotardo, Rio Paranaíba and Campos Altos. Managing a total area 3,200 hectares they process not just coffee, but carrots, garlic, potatoes, onions, corn, soybeans and wheat.

With scale they aim at 'quality, efficiently', and are aligned with sustainability and respect for the environment, contributing to the social and economic development of the region where they operate and generating value for all its constituent elements.



Brazil is to other coffee-growing countries as Jupiter is to other planets – huge, and deserving a category of its own. But despite its size, we don't look to Brazil as a source of specialty; we were once told that asking for a sample of SSFC 17/18 is like asking for a sample of a 'big mac'.

This, however, is an old view from an older generation. We now have a younger crop of farmers entering the specialty scene – this generation was raised with the Internet, knows 21st-century coffee, and are excited to find out what's possible for their family's farm.

But it's a struggle to convince parents that this new approach is not just youthful fantasy – with one approach working so well for so long, it's hard to take specialty seriously. This battle seems to be

happening inside households across Brazil, as city-dwelling, college-educated sons and daughters return to the family farm to help their baby-boomer parents prepare for retirement.

Despite this tension, wherever we look we see small successes building a case for specialty, one win at a time. It could be glowing feedback, a good yield, a high price or even just the smallest recognition by someone outside the family. And the case is growing especially strong in the area around Sao Gortado where we find Yuki Minami and Aequitas coffee educating farmers on what they have and what it's worth. Here we find farmers in their 20s and 30s standing on the shoulders of giants; they are looking near into the future, and see specialty where we in the US have not yet