



# TLR

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**Canada** The Local Journalism Initiative is funded by the Government of Canada.

## COVID Tracker

**NOTL active cases (last 28 days): 46**  
**Region active cases: 875**  
**Region deaths: 646**  
**Region total cases: 48,443**

*\*Nov. 16 data per Niagara Region Public Health. Public health warns that "Due to the surge in COVID-19 cases, limited availability of testing, and changes to case and contact management practices, case counts shown (above) are an underestimate of the true number of individuals in Niagara with COVID-19. Data should be interpreted with caution." Case data for municipalities is also now being interpreted in 28-day cycles.*



**Contributed by Patty Garriock**

"When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too." - Paulo Coelho

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## First snow of season



Lake Report photographer Dave Van de Laar captured this photo of the first snow of the season on Sunday.

### Editorial

## Airing some dirty laundry

Kevin MacLean  
 Managing Editor

Farming is a tough business. Long, long hours, back-breaking work, many large expenses over which you have little control.

Plus there are rules and regulations imposed by various levels of government, and you're always at the mercy of Mother Nature.

But it's also work that is crucial, innovative and essential – to life, to the economy, to Niagara-on-the-Lake.

We can't profess to be experts on everything the agricultural sector does, but we do love and appreciate the very necessary work that farmers dedicate themselves to.

We also greatly appreciate the work done by seasonal workers, mainly from Jamaica and Mexico. They travel here, leaving families and loved ones behind, to earn money to support those families.

They also are critical to the success of Canada's farming community, doing the difficult labour that many Canadians simply refuse to do: spending long days in the heat, rain and cold to plant, then care for and eventu-

ally harvest the bounty that farms like those across Niagara produce.

For some, Canada becomes a permanent home, but for many, our country offers meaningful employment that inspires them to return year after year.

In a lone editorial, it is impossible to sum up, let alone resolve, the issues and problems facing the farming industry or its migrant workers.

So, for now, we'll deal with just one. Laundry.

It feels ridiculous to be suggesting in a first world nation like ours that the ability to have and work in clean clothes should be a luxury. But for many migrant workers that is the case.

While some farmers have been accused of mistreating their workers – accusations that cannot be taken lightly and need deeper investigation – for now we'll give the industry the benefit of the doubt.

But on the subject of clean clothes for those who toil in the fields, we have to ask: Why is this even an issue? It seems fundamental in Canada. Period. Full stop.

However, as a Lake Report investigation by reporter

Somer Slobodian last week showed, there is a disconnect between the rules of the federal and provincial governments on laundry. And, as if that is not enough, inspections and enforcement are left to a third level of government, the region.

Bureaucrats are aware of the confusion but suggest it could be years before regulations are changed and aligned.

The feds require "laundry facilities, including an adequate number of washing machines and where possible, dryers." (Exactly what's "adequate"?)

The province wants "at least one laundering tub for every 15 bunks" and the Region of Niagara's expectation is "one laundry tub or washing machine per 15 persons." (There's a choice?)

The result: some get washing machines, many get washboard-style laundry tubs to scrub their clothes on, and few, if any, get dryers. That's why you see laundry hanging from clothes lines outside bunkhouses all over rural Niagara.

And many travel to a laundromat to do something most of us take for granted.

We don't comprehend why

this isn't so embarrassing that the people overseeing seasonal worker programs at the two senior levels of government have not been shamed into fixing it.

Their lack of action is appalling. Also appalling is that we might not even be aware of this if not for Ceto Reid.

In October, one day before he was to return to Jamaica, the worker at P.G. Enns Farms, was seriously injured when he was struck by a car.

While toting his clean laundry. While riding his bicycle. In St. Catharines, several kilometres from the farm. (Thankfully, Reid is recovering and the community has rallied to support him.)

It's easy to blame farmers and ask why they don't just do more, but the truth is they appear to be operating within the rules of their highly regulated industry.

Yes, some could do better, but given how the federal government oversees the country's seasonal worker programs, we need to see some real leadership on this issue. And we need it done now, not in 2023 or 2024.

It's laundry for goodness sake. Fix it.

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