

<b>Red Deer Advocate (Red Deer, AB)</b>				Order/Commande
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## Barley shortage unlikely to favour local producers: commission

Bitter about the prospects of rising beer prices?

Don't vent your frustration at farmers, says the Alberta Barley Commission.

A poor malt barley crop in

Alberta last year — as well as poor growing conditions in Russia, Ukraine and Australia — is expected to leave maltsters with a feedstock shortage next year. But few producers here are likely to take advantage, said commission chair Matt Sawyer, who farms near Acme.

"If we'd had a great crop in Western Canada, or were expecting one in 2011, this might be bigger news for farmers.

"The unfortunate part for farmers is that in years like this one, the price goes up when there is little to sell. The opposite is also true; when farmers have a lot to sell, the price drops."

The commission also pointed out that farmers average less than a penny for each bottle of beer sold.

"In the big picture, beer prices are more likely to go up based on packaging materials, taxation and transportation costs," said Mike Leslie, the commission's CEO.

The Alberta Barley Commission represents some 17,000 barley producers in this province.

