

Bad weather impacts global barley supply

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If crop prices do increase, Alberta Barley Commission CEO Mike Leslie said it's not likely to occur until next year.

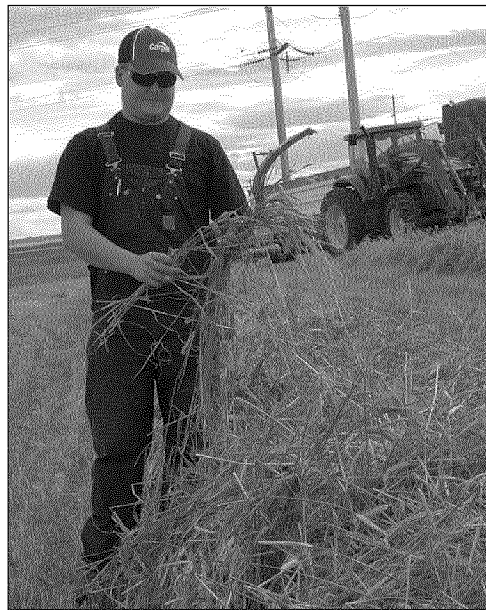
"There's sort of a year delay," he said. "If we have a crop failure this year then there will be an issue."

Prices have been rising after poor weather in growing areas around the world impacted crops, lowering the global supply of barley.

"We just had a bad year last year," said Leslie.

According to the Alberta Barley Commission, the predicted high for the price of barley this year is \$7.34 per bushel. It's an increase of more than \$3 from 2010, but only \$2 from 2009. Rising transportation costs will likely have a bigger impact than crop prices, he added.

As well, Leslie said farmers won't get much from higher beer prices and they don't get much to begin with. He said the return to the farmer averages out to 0.62



OKOTOKS WESTERN WHEEL FILE PHOTO

Okotoks area farmer Mike Imler said farmers won't get much from rising beer prices due to higher barley prices.

cents per bottle.

Ultimately, he said barley prices are being used as an excuse from brewers looking to charge more for beer.

Okotoks-area farmer Mike Imler said the Canadian Wheat Board adds another factor to the equation. He said he has

to sell malt barley to the board and his return is based on prices set by the board not the brewers.

No matter what happens, Imler said farmers don't get much back from higher beer prices.

"The farmer can't control the price of beer," he said.

