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# Garrison invests in local hop farm

By BRUCE ERSKINE Business Reporter  
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Brian Titus, president of Garrison Brewing Company, holds up a glass of the company's Tall Ship Amber Ale. (Christian Laforce / Staff)

Garrison Brewing Co. is getting hopped up, locally and organically.

The award-winning Halifax microbrewery has signed a five-year deal to obtain organically grown hops for its craft beers from FiddleHop Farms near Truro.

"We're putting our money where our mouth is," brewery president Brian Titus said in an interview Wednesday.

Titus wouldn't say exactly how much money Garrison is investing in the two-hectare hop yard, which is

scheduled to be planted next spring. But he said it is 20 per cent of the startup costs and gives FiddleHop Farms owner Evan Price a guaranteed customer for his product.

"It's a significant investment to allow him to get up and going," Titus said.

The agreement takes Garrison from experimenting with local hop production, which it has done at Ross Farm Museum, toward long-term commercial production in Nova Scotia.

"We're investing in an industry we've been championing," Titus said.

Price, a fourth year Dalhousie University finance student, said he was pleased to partner with Garrison on the local hop project.

"This is a great way to strengthen our economy from within," he said in a news release.

Price has harvested fiddleheads for several years and called growing hops a "natural progression" for him.

The student farmer was on his way to New Brunswick Wednesday for a university business plan competition and couldn't be reached. But Titus is confident in his abilities.

"He's proven himself to be resourceful and ambitious," he said.

Garrison brews Hopyard Pale Ale, which doesn't use local hops, and 3 Fields Harvest Ale, seasonal, wet-hopped ale that used hops from three Maritime hop yards.

Titus said he is trying to secure enough Nova Scotia hops to ramp up production of 3 Fields and to use in Hopyard and other brands.

Garrison, which began selling its Imperial I.P.A. through the Liquor Control Board of Ontario in September, is negotiating with other producers to guarantee a steady hop supply.

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