Pre-harvest considerations for garlic

Garlic planting is under way across the state, and despite a good harvest across most areas this year we continue to receive many questions about proper pre-planting treatment of seed to prevent diseases and bloat nematode. Growers are more likely than ever to take a hard look at what they are buying or saving for seed, which is a very positive development from a disease control standpoint. Discarding suspect seed now saves growers money, labor, and time later. Here are some things to consider as you go through your seed garlic and ready your garlic field this year.

**Seed Selection:**

Most of you should already have your seed at this point, but make sure that you still grade hard while cracking the bulbs before planting. Don’t just examine each bulb, examine each clove, since some diseases such as neck rots canl be present on the inside edge or bottom of the clove and will not be detectable from the outside of the bulb. Remove any cloves that have signs of disease or are damaged in any way. Try to select cloves that are medium to large. However, if you are having any trouble with harvesting bulbs that contain just one clove, try to remove the very largest cloves from your seed stock this year, since sometimes extremely large cloves will not make new bulbs with individual cloves. This can also occur due to excessive cold.