



December 31, 2015

Dear Friends,

Here is the 139th issue of our weekly gardening newsletter for Houston, the Gulf Coast and beyond. We really appreciate all of our readers hanging in there with us, sharing stories and inspiring us in so many ways.

Thanks so much!

This newsletter is a project of The Lazy Gardener, Brenda Beust Smith, John Ferguson and Mark Bowen. (John and Mark are with Nature's Way Resources). We also have a great supporting cast of contributing writers and technical specialists who will chime in and tweak away regularly. We would love to keep receiving your input on this newsletter . . . comments . . . suggestions . . . questions. . . Email your thoughts to: lazygardenerandfriends@gmail.com. Thanks so much for your interest.

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Enjoy!

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*Fruit & berry growers in-the-know will probably head first for, left to right, Natchez thornless blackberries and Cara Cara orange trees at the Waller County Master Gardener Jan. 30 Sale and for ItSaul summer raspberries and Victoria red grapes at the Jan 23 Montgomery County Master Gardener sale.*

## BY BRENDA BEUST SMITH

A Southwest Houston couple has a fun, inventive way of keeping traditions going in spite of the inevitable challenges of getting all their adult children home for the holidays at the same time.

Years ago each child was given a fruit tree of his/her own choosing. The trees were planted in large containers (paint-decorated by the kids). The thriving trees are still residing in Mom & Dad's backyard until they can be transplanted into more permanent garden sites.

Since the kids' schedules made a full "Family Christmas" difficult, this became an "updating year." One thinned out his three avocado trees. A pear tree was lifted and more soil added. A 'Pink Lemonade' lemon tree needed a larger container.

A pomegranate - as per advice from an Iranian friend - had already been pruned down to the three healthiest stalks (to increase larger size fruit). The rooted cuttings were given away as Christmas gifts.

One son's satsuma was so covered with fruit, the family ate all but 10 of the amazingly sweet oranges. That'll teach him to show up so late!

\* \* \*

If buying fruit trees -- for whatever reason -- is one of your New Year's Resolutions, get your running shoes on. January is Fruit Tree Sale time in the Greater Houston area.

If you are new to growing fruits, nuts & berries, check our calendar below for great "fruity" how-to programs in your area. This calendar is definitely a zeitgeist of gardening today as survey after survey show the fastest growing trend among home gardeners is edibles.

January is the best month to plant fruit trees in this area. Our abundance of sales not only provide the best variety choices for specific areas, experts are on hand to answer questions, offer advice and diagnose problems.

The eight-plus-separate counties that make up the Greater Houston area cover a wide range of growing environments. Montgomery County certainly has marked differences from Galveston County. Fort Bend County has challenges not faced by, say, Liberty County.

Some folks have room for large trees, some want dwarfs. Some prefer citrus; others, stone fruits. Some are berry fanatics, others crave homegrown nuts.

As a bonus, many of the sales have scheduled previews, so you can be prepared when doors open on actual sale days.

Mark your calendars for . . .



### **SAT., JAN. 16: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE**

9am-1pm or sell-out, Fort Bend County Fairground Barn-H, 4310 Highway 36S, Rosenberg. 281-341-7068; [www.fbmga.org](http://www.fbmga.org)

✓ FORT BEND SALE PREVIEW: Thurs., Jan. 14; 6:30-8:30pm, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Building B, 4310 Highway 36 South, Rosenberg. Free. 281-341-7068; [www.fbmga.org](http://www.fbmga.org)



### **SAT., JAN. 16 - URBAN HARVEST 2016 FRUIT TREE SALE**

9am-1pm (or sell-out), Rice University Stadium; 5600 Greenbriar Dr. 713-880-5540, [urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale](http://urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale)

\* TWO (!) URBAN HARVEST SALE PREVIEWS:

✓ Sat., Jan. 9 -- 9:30am-noon, United Way Community Resource Center; 50 Waugh Drive, Houston, TX 77007; 713-880-5540, <http://urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale>

✓ Tues., Jan. 12 -- 6:30-9pm; United Way Community Resource Center; 50 Waugh Drive, Houston, TX 77007; 713-880-5540, <http://urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale>



### **SAT., JAN. 23: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE**

8am-presentation; 9am-noon sale. Montgomery County Extension Office, 9020 Airport Rd., Conroe. 936-539-7822; [www.mcmga.com](http://www.mcmga.com)

✓ MONTGOMERY COUNTY SALE PREVIEW Sat., Jan 16: Fruit Trees - Selection, Planting, Pruning, Spraying and Care, 9-11am, Montgomery County Extension Office, Tom LeRoy Education Center, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. \$5. Montgomery County Master Gardener event. 936-539-7824 or [www.mcmga.com](http://www.mcmga.com)



### **SAT., JAN. 30: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE** (and presale pickup)

10am-2pm, 850 Bus. 290 N. Hempstead. [txmg.org/wallermg](http://txmg.org/wallermg)



## **SAT, JAN. 30 HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE & LECTURES**

9am-1pm (or sell-out), Bear Creek Park; 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600;  
[hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx)



## **SAT, FEB. 13: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER, PRECINCT 2, ANNUAL FRUIT TREE & TOMATO SALE**

Pre-Sale Talk: 8am; Sale: 9am-1pm (or sell-out). Pasadena Convention Center; 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena. 281-855-5600; [hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx)

\* \* \*

### **SPEAKING OF ROUND FRUIT . . .**

Need a twist for your New Year's Eve party guests? Take a tip from the Filipinos. They prepare and eat 13 round, sweet fruits (13 is considered a lucky number).

And, at the stroke of midnight, everyone should have a very round grape in his/her mouth at the stroke of midnight.

Or, some say 12 grapes is luckier.

Either way, that should make our traditional midnight kisses more interesting!

Who else would tell you these things?

## **A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Thank you for recycling  
your Christmas Tree at the  
WCID 132 water plant!





The WCID 132 invites our neighbors to participate in our annual Merry Mulching Christmas Tree Recycling Program. Strip all the ornaments, garland, tinsel, etc. from your tree (no artificial trees!) and bring it to the grassy dead-end area outside the water plant's fence (there will be a sign) 4107 Evening Trail, between December 26th and January 10th.

The mulch from the trees will be used throughout our Water Conservation Demonstration and Research Center. By recycling your Christmas tree, you will help preserve finite water resources, and keep your tree out of the landfill!

Watch for the coupon in January and bring it by The Garden for a 5# bag of organic mulch with fertilizer additive. Start the recycling tradition! Mulch pick-up every Saturday in January with coupon. One per family please.

THANK  
YOU!

\* \* \*

## **WEEKLY GARDENING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS CALENDAR**

**TO SUBMIT EVENTS - PLEASE - USE OUR FORMAT!****Find a similar event in our calendar below and copy the format EXACTLY.****Then you can add additional information. Email to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net).****Not using our format will result in a delay in publication! Events will not be picked up from other newsletters.****If we inspire you to attend any of these events, please let them know you heard about it in**

MON., JAN. 4: GROWING CITRUS BY BETH HOUSE, 10am-noon, Amegy Bank Community Room, 28201 SH 249, Tomball. Free. Tomball Garden Club event, [tomballgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:tomballgardenclub@gmail.com)

THURS., JAN. 7: IS YOUR STYLE IN YOUR GARDEN? BY MARGARET SINCLAIR, 9:30am, Municipal Utility Building #81, 805 Hidden Canyon Dr., Katy. Free. Nottingham Country Garden Club Program. [nottinghamgardenclub.org](http://nottinghamgardenclub.org)

FRI., JAN. 8: PERSONALIZING YOUR GARDEN FOCAL POINTS BY DARNELL SCHREIBER, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT., JAN. 9: GROWING AVOCADO & PAPAYA BY JERRY HURLBERT, 9-11:30am; GROWING PEACHES IN GALVESTON COUNTY by Herman Auer, 1-2pm, AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. 281-534-3413; reservations: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net). [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

SAT., JAN. 9: PREVIEW OF JAN. 16 URBAN HARVEST 2016 FRUIT TREE SALE, 9:30am-noon, United Way Community Resource Center; 50 Waugh Drive. 713-880-5540, [urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale](http://urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale)

Sun., Jan. 10: BAREROOT & SOILD BUILDING CLASS BY DIANNE NORMAN, 1-3 p.m., Wabash Feed & Garden, 5701 Washington Ave., 713-863-8322, \$10. [wabashfeed.com](http://wabashfeed.com)

TUES., JAN. 12: FOREST ECOLOGY / TREE CARE BY JOHN ROSS. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. [www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

TUE., JAN. 12: FOREST MANAGEMENT IN THE WOODLANDS AREA BY JOHN ROSS, 7 pm. South Regional Library, 2101 Lake Robbins Drive, The Woodlands. Free. A Woodlands G.R.E.E.N. event. <http://www.thewoodlandsgreen.org/>

SAT., JAN. 12: PREVIEW OF JAN. 16 URBAN HARVEST 2016 FRUIT TREE SALE, 6:30-9pm, , United Way Community Resource Center; 50 Waugh Drive. 713-880-5540, [urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale](http://urbanharvest.org/fruit-tree-sale)

WED., JAN. 13: TOP BAR BEEHIVES BY DEAN COOK. Noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

THUR., JAN. 14: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PREVIEW OF THE JAN. 16 FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE, 6:30-8:30pm, Fort Bend County Fairgrounds, Building B, 4310 Highway 36 South, Rosenberg. Free. 281-341-7068; [www.fbmg.org](http://www.fbmg.org)

THURS., JAN. 14: BED BUILDING FROM THE GROUND UP, 7:30PM, CHERRIE FLORES GARDEN PAVILION, 1500 Hermann Drive, Houston 77004. Free. Houston Rose Society event. [houstonrose.org](http://houstonrose.org)

THURS., JAN. 14: HOW TO GROW OLIVES AND PRODUCE OLIVE OIL BY RANDY & MONICA BRAZIL, 10-11:30 am, Clear Lake Meeting Room, 5001 Nasa Parkway. Free. Harris County Master Gardeners at Precinct 2 event. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu) SAT.,

THURS., JAN. 14. GROWING CITRUS TREES IN CONTAINERS, 9:30-11:am, John Panzarella, Missouri City Recreation and Tennis Center, 2701 Cypress Point Dr., Missouri City. Free. [QuailValleyGardenClub.org](http://QuailValleyGardenClub.org)

JAN. 16: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL FRUIT & CITRUS TREE SALE, 9am-1pm or sold out, Fort Bend County Fairground Bam-H, 4310 Highway 36S, Rosenberg. 281-341-7068; [www.fbmg.org](http://www.fbmg.org)

SAT., JAN. 16: COUSHATTA CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW, 1-4pm, First Christian Church Fellowship Building, 3500 N. Loop 336 W, Conroe. Don Marcotte, 936-661-1101. [funny-farm2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:funny-farm2@sbcglobal.net)

SAT., JAN. 16: FRUIT TREES - SELECTION, PLANTING, PRUNING, SPRAYING & CARE, 9-11am, Montgomery County Extension Office, Tom LeRoy Education Center, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. Master Gardener event. \$5. 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

SAT., JAN. 16: WEDGE GRAFTING BY SUE JEFFCO, 9-11am; KITCHEN GARDENING BY MARY DEMENY, 1-3pm, AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. 281-534-3413. Reservations: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net). [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

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MON., JAN. 18: OPEN GARDEN DAY AND PLANT SALE WITH HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS AT PRECINCT 2, 8:30-11am, Genoa Friendship Garden, 1202 Genoa Red Bluff Rd. Free. [hcmga.tamu.edu](http://hcmga.tamu.edu)

TUES., JAN. 19: GARDENING BY THE SQUARE FOOT BY JOHN JONS, 6:30-8 p.m., at Galveston County AgriLife Extension in Carbide Park, 4102 Main, La Marque. Free. 281-534-3413. Reservations: [galv3@wt.net](mailto:galv3@wt.net). [aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/galveston)

THURS., JAN. 21: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER 2016 INTERN TRAINING PROGRAM BEGINS. Registration (\$160; Jan. 11 deadline). [www.txmg.org/walleimg](http://www.txmg.org/walleimg).

SAT., JAN. 23: MONTGOMERY COUNTY MASTER GARDENER FRUIT AND NUT TREE SALE, 8am program, 9am-noon sale, Montgomery Co. Extension Office, 9020 Airport Road, Conroe. 936-539-7824, [mcmga.com](http://mcmga.com)

MONDAYS., JAN. 25-FEB. 29: TEXAS GULF COAST GARDENER, TIER III: THE ART OF LANDSCAPE DESIGN. 9am-3pm.,



Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. 713-274-4160

SAT., JAN. 30: WALLER COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FRUIT & NUTTREE SALE (and presale pickup), 10am-2pm, 850 Bus 290 N. Hempstead. [txmg.org/walleimg](http://txmg.org/walleimg)

SAT., JAN. 30 HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ANNUAL FRUIT & NUT TREE SALE & LECTURES, 9am-1pm (or sell-out), Bear Creek Park; 3033 Bear Creek Dr. 281-855-5600; [hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx)

SAT., FEB. 6: COUSHATTA CAMELLIA SOCIETY SHOW, 1-4pm, Katy and E. Don Walker, Sr. Education Center, 1400 19th St., Huntsville. Don Marcotte, 936-661-1101. [funny-farm2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:funny-farm2@sbcglobal.net)

TUE., FEB 9: SHADE GARDENING BY GUDRUM OPPERMAN. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. [www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

WED., FEB. 10: SPRING INTO YOUR LAWN - ORGANIC LAWN CARE & SPRINGTIME PREP BY BOB DAILEY. noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI., FEB. 12: THE HOLISTIC GARDEN, BY DR. JOE NOVAK, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

SAT., FEB. 13: HARRIS COUNTY MASTER GARDENER, PRECINCT 2, ANNUAL FRUIT TREE & TOMATO SALE, Pre-Sale Talk: 8am; Sale: 9am-1pm (or sell-out). Pasadena Convention Center; 7902 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena, TX 77507 281-855-5600; [hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx](http://hcmga.tamu.edu/Public/pubSales.aspx)

WED., FEB. 17: MASTER PLAN FOR THE HOUSTON BOTANIC GARDEN BY ADRIAAN GUEZE, 2016 NANCY STALLWORTH THOMAS HORTICULTURE LECTURE, 10am, Bagby Hall, St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 717 Sage Road. Free. Garden Club of Houston event. [gchouston.org](http://gchouston.org).

SAT., FEB. 20: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS PREVIEW FOR THE VEGETABLE- HERB PLANT SALE, 9-11am, Bud O'Shieles Community Center, 1330 Band Rd., Rosenberg. Free. 281 341-7068, [www.fbmg.org](http://www.fbmg.org)

SAT. FEB. 27: FORT BEND COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ANNUAL VEGETABLE-HERB PLANT SALE, 9am-noon, Fort Bend County Extension Office, 1402 Band Rd., Rosenberg. 281 341-7068, [www.fbmg.org](http://www.fbmg.org)

TUES., MAR. 8: EASTER FLORAL DESIGN CONCEPTS BY TONY HUFFMAN. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. [www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

WED. MAR. 9: MARCH MART VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 10:30-11:30am, MARCH MART PREVIEW OF SALE PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI., MAR. 11: BULLET PROOF VIBURNUMS FOR THE GULF SOUTH BY DR. DAVID CREECH, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

WED. MAR. 12: MARCH MART VOLUNTEER TRAINING, 9:30-10:30am, and MARCH MART PREVIEW OF SALE PLANTS, noon-2pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

FRI.-SAT., MAR. 18-19: MARCH MART, 8am-4pm, Mercer Botanic Garden, 2206 Aldine-Westfield, Humble. Free. 713-274-4160.

TUE., APR. 12: PLANT PROPAGATION TECHNIQUES. 9 am. South County Community Center, 2235 Lake Robbins Dr., The Woodlands. Free. Woodlands Garden Club event. [www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org](http://www.thewoodlandsgardenclub.org)

FRI., APR. 9: XPLOING CREATIVITY BY LILLIAN RICO, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Drive. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs event. [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

FRI., MAY 13: NIGHT SOUNDS - TWILIGHT WALK THROUGH THE GARDEN BY DEBBIE BANFIELD, 10:15am, White Oak Conference Center, 7603 Antoine Dr. Free. Houston Federation of Garden Clubs; [houstonfederationgardenclubs.org](http://houstonfederationgardenclubs.org)

**If we inspire you to attend any of these events, please let them know you heard about it in**

**THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS NEWSLETTER!**

**TO SUBMIT EVENTS:**

**Find a similar event in our calendar below and copy the format EXACTLY.**  
**Then you can add additional information. Email to [lazygardener@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lazygardener@sbcglobal.net)**  
**Not using our format will result in a delay in publication.**  
**Events will not be picked up from newsletters.**

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE  
POSSIBLE BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS**



## ABOUT US

### BRENDA BEUST SMITH

WE KNOW HER BEST AS THE LAZY GARDENER . . .

. . . but Brenda Beust Smith is also:

- \* a national award-winning writer & editor
- \* a nationally-published writer & photographer
- \* a national horticultural speaker
- \* a former Houston Chronicle reporter

When the Chronicle discontinued Brenda's 45-year-old "Lazy Gardener" print column a couple of years ago, it ranked as the longest-running, continuously-published local newspaper column in the Greater Houston area.

Brenda's gradual sideways step from Chronicle reporter into gardening writing led first to an 18-year series of when-to-do-what Lazy Gardener Calendars, then to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* book and now to her *Lazy Gardener's Guide* on CD (which retails for \$20. However, \$5 of every sale is returned to the sponsoring group at her speaking engagements).

A Harris County Master Gardener, Brenda has served on the boards of many Greater Houston area horticulture organizations and has hosted local radio and TV shows, most notably a 10+-year Lazy Gardener run on HoustonPBS (Ch. 8) and her call-in "EcoGardening" show on KPFT-FM.

Brenda recently ended her decades-long stint as Production Manager of the Garden Club of America's **BULLETIN** magazine. Although still an active horticulture lecturer and broad-based freelance writer, Brenda's main focus now is **THE LAZY GARDENER & FRIENDS HOUSTON GARDEN NEWSLETTER** with John Ferguson and Mark Bowen of Nature's Way Resources.

A native of New Orleans and graduate of St. Agnes Academy and the University of Houston, Brenda lives in Aldine and is married to the now retired Aldine High School Coach Bill Smith. They have one son, Blake.

Regarding this newsletter, Brenda is the lead writer, originator of it and the daily inspiration for it. We so appreciate the way she has made gardening such a fun way to celebrate life together for such a long time.

### JOHN FERGUSON

John is a native Houstonian and has over 27 years of business experience. He owns Nature's Way Resources, a composting company that specializes in high quality compost, mulch, and soil mixes. He holds a MS degree in Physics and Geology and is a licensed Soil Scientist in Texas.

John has won many awards in horticulture and environmental issues. He represents the composting industry on the Houston-Galveston Area Council for solid waste. His personal garden has been featured in several horticultural books and "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine. His business has been recognized in the Wall Street Journal for the quality and value of their products. He is a member of the Physics Honor Society and many other professional societies. John is the co-author of the book *Organic Management for the Professional*.

For this newsletter, John contributes articles regularly and is responsible for publishing it.

### MARK BOWEN

Mark is a native Houstonian, a horticulturist, certified permaculturist and organic specialist with a background in garden design, land restoration and organic project management. He is currently the general manager of Nature's Way Resources. Mark is also the co-author of the book *Habitat Gardening for Houston and Southeast Texas*, the author of the book *Naturalistic Landscaping for the Gulf Coast*, co-author of the *Bayou Planting Guide* and contributing landscape designer for the book *Landscaping Homes: Texas*.

With respect to this newsletter, Mark serves as a co-editor and periodic article contributor.

### PABLO HERNANDEZ

Pablo Hernandez is the special projects coordinator for Nature's Way Resources. His realm of responsibilities include: serving as a webmaster, IT support, technical problem solving/troubleshooting, metrics management, quality control, and he is a certified compost facility operator.

Pablo helps this newsletter happen from a technical support standpoint.



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