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▶ Reporter phone number: 816-590-4288/ 573-424-2260 ◀

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Suggested Web hed: Environmentally-friendly parking lot installed

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Summary graf (30 words max) that tells readers why they should care: A Columbia educational farm is installing an environmentally-friendly parking lot.

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Related elements (photos, graphics, multimedia)?: two graphics, picture

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INFO BOX: *& Gardens*

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Jefferson Farm is opening in Spring 2009. Until then, it is holding free open houses on the following dates:

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July 19

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August 2

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August 30

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▶ copied:William Mansell

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newsed: ◀

Bdy-Byline 1

By ASHLEY SIMPSON

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Bdy-Byline 2

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COLUMBIA – The never-ending roar of forklifts made it difficult to hear as gravel dust saturated the air. A crowd of city officials, engineers and business owners gathered at Jefferson Farm ▶ added & Gardens ◀ & Gardens to admire the installation of an environmentally-friendly parking lot ▶ on ◀ Wednesday morning.

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The lot, constructed by Advanced Pavement Technology, a Chicago company, is one of the first in Mid-Missouri to use ▶ deleted utilize and added use ◀ ▶ “ ◀ pavers. ▶ ” ◀ As laborers worked to install the ▶ these ◀ interlocking concrete bricks, the scene resembled putting together a huge 110-by-130 foot puzzle.

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William Schneider, owner of Advanced Pavement Technology, said that “permeable pavers” are becoming increasingly popular for parking lots and college campuses. The design uses ▶ utilizes ◀ a layering of rock and gravel of varying

sizes topped with a paver. Because of the design, water runoff is minimized. While conventional parking lots depend upon a drain system to catch storm water runoff, permeable pavers allow for rainwater to absorb into the soil.

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Water runoff from conventional parking lots generally contains oil and other contaminants, but such pollutants are retained and filtered within the layers of the permeable lot, preventing them from reaching nearby Hinkson Creek.

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"As the water travels through this, it's purified," said Schneider, who has been in the permeable-paving business for seven years.

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The project was partially funded by federal funds allocated through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources under the Clean Water Act. An estimate for the total cost could not be given.

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"We try to fund projects that are innovative," said Missouri Department of Natural Resources environmental specialist Georganne Bowman.

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The parking lot is part of Jefferson Farm & Gardens' ▶ added & Gardens' ◀ larger effort to educate the public on horticulture, agriculture and conservation. The Farm is not set to open until Spring 2009, but will host ^{four}~~four~~ _{thrice} open houses this summer.

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Visitors to the farm will be able to interact with animals, learn about native crops and pick apples from the orchard. Solar panels and rain water recycling are a few of the visible conservation efforts.

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Though an environmentally-friendly parking lot may seem like an oxymoron, the necessity of allocating space for parking still exists. Mayor Darwin Hindman, who was in attendance on Wednesday, said the concept of permeable pavers is of interest.

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"There are advantages that are instantly apparent," he said. "This could end up being something very attractive to Columbia."

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Rock ▶ added space and capitalized Bridge ◀ Bridge ▶ added Memorial ◀ Memorial State Park ▶ deleted, has ◀ already uses

similar technology in its office parking lot.