

OPINION PACKAGES

OUR VIEW

No joke

Olean producers get touchy over fake fat

Since the Food and Drug Administration first gave olestra the OK in January, the fake fat has been the diet industry's flavor of the month.

Olestra is a synthetic chemical made from sugar and vegetable oil. It looks like real fat, but its molecules are too large to digest, so it passes through the body unabsorbed.

It has been the focus of scientific studies and not-so-scientific taste tests. It has been a topic of much debate and the butt of innumerable jokes — particularly because consumption of the product has been associated with such unpleasant side effects as diarrhea, cramping and "anal leakage."

The FDA requires a warning label on olestra products, warning consumers of potential for these and other embarrassing digestive problems.

But even without the labels, the message is sure to get out.

In fact, it already has. Comics and night show hosts are just eating it up.

With the announcement that olestra-based Pringles potato chips would soon be hitting the shelves in some supermarkets, Jay Leno couldn't resist....

"The reports say olestra is said to cause diarrhea and, in their words now, anal leakage," Leno told his late night audience. "So folks, when you're through with the Pringles, you might want to hang on to the can."

And the jokes just keep coming.

Now, along with gastrointestinal problems, it seems the fat substitute also causes hypersensitivity — especially for its producer, Procter & Gamble Co.

The company, which has given the product the brand name "Olean," recently released a series of commercials in its defense. The commercials feature testimonials assuring consumers that olestra-based products have been "Tested and approved by people like you."

Procter & Gamble spokeswoman Sydney McHugh said, "The ad campaign captures the tremendously positive experiences with Olean chips that consumers already have had and are sharing."

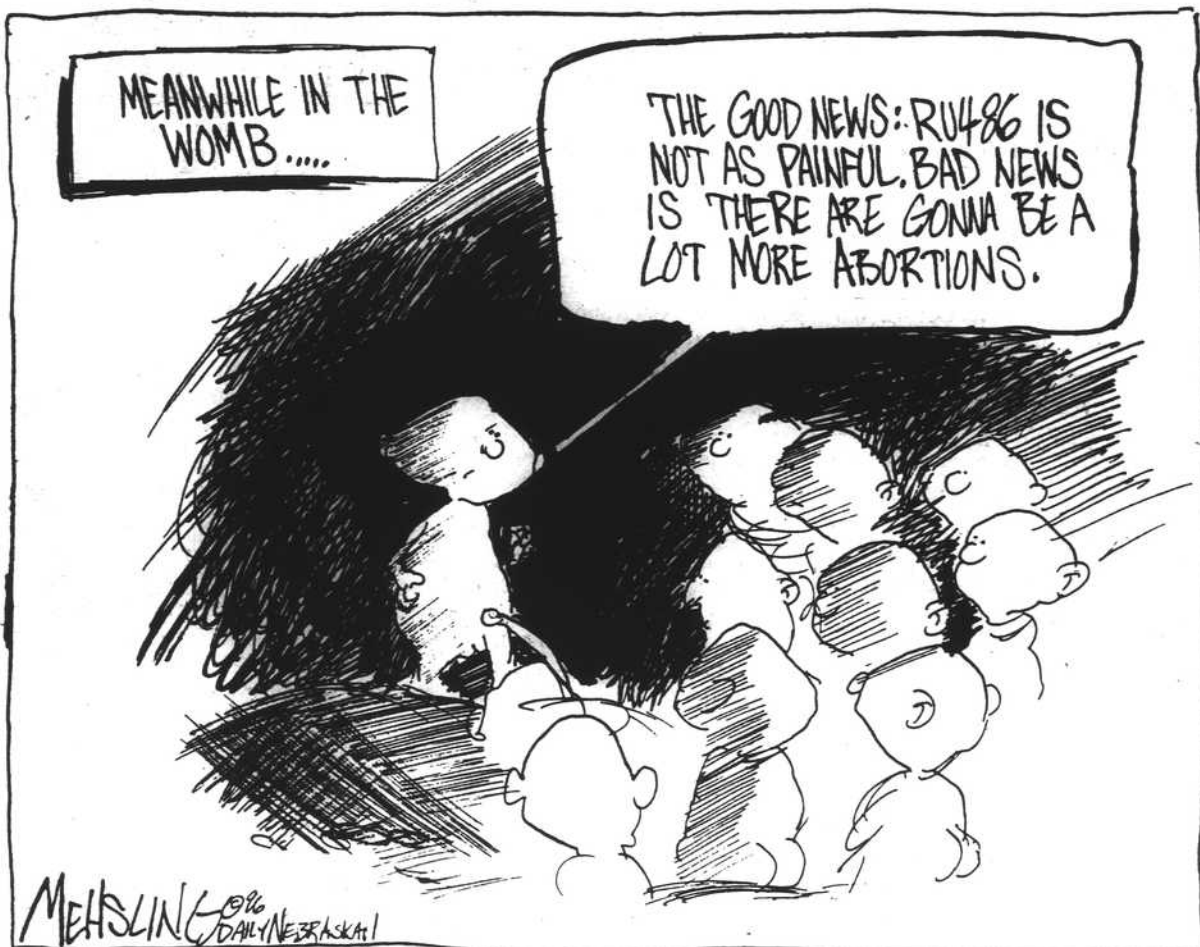
This sort of "touchy-feely" approach to potato chip ads is unique.

Procter & Gamble seems to think it might dissuade further ridicule of its product.

Fat chance.

“Now, along with gastrointestinal problems, it seems the fat substitute also causes hypersensitivity — especially for its producer.”

MEHSLING'S VIEW



GUEST VIEW

Ted TAYLOR

We've got your ticket to the world

There is an international academic adventure just waiting for you at 1237 R St.

Easy access to Clayton, Australia; Toledo, Spain; Aristotle University in Greece and many other foreign universities is right inside the door.

Inside the doors of the Office of International Affairs — your bridge between UNL and the rest of the world.

So go on in. Having an interest in the world we live in and understanding the possibilities international academic exchange can bring you is all they require.

From there, it's up to you whether or not you want to pick up some of the information that is available to you about studying abroad.

And they'll bet you do. My two closest friends, junior photojournalism major Tony Gray and junior secondary-education major Trish Hagen did.

The next thing they knew they were adding "international traveler" to their resumes and making me feel like a loser for not having spent a little time abroad.

And upon returning home, the two just seem like different, more rounded people.

But Hagen and Gray are only two of the more than 280 UNL students in the past year who have traveled overseas to live and study.

Let me say that again: to live and study.

Exchange students from UNL experienced the culture, the night life, the people and the history of the country they're going to school in.

For those of us from Nebraska, fourth grade pretty much summed up all the Nebraska history we would need to know for the rest of our lives.

But it's understandable if you are a bit hesitant to really start thinking about studying abroad because a lot of you are like me and can barely afford a Whopper Value Meal.

Do note, however that the most common misconception about the international exchange program is the cost of going to school in a foreign country for a semester.

Little do most students know, but



a semester abroad nearly mirrors, financially that is, that of a semester at UNL.

For example: a sophomore (from Nebraska) who is taking 12 hours of nothing and eating 14 hamburgers and salads a week while living in the dorms with a roommate who snores all night will pay \$4,548.

That same person can live in Clayton, Australia (15 miles from Melbourne) for a year and attend Monash University (Australia's largest), for about \$4,607.

The only drawback, if you can call it that, is the cost of a plane ticket to get you there and back.

And that, according to my sources, will cost ya about \$1000. (But you can watch for bargains.)

Or maybe the year-long warm weather in Australia isn't to your liking. Maybe Australia is just a little "too American" for you. Maybe you want to put your European knowledge to the real test by studying in Greece or the Czech Republic.

Included in a \$5,800 bill, one can receive 12 hours of tuition at either Palack University in the Czech Republic or Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, Greece, room and board with three meals a day, round-trip airfare from Omaha, insurance and numerous, exciting weekend field trips.

Geez, about the only thing it doesn't include is money for laundry and a gyro or two.

Granted, you might find yourself spending a few extra dollars while living in Greece, Mexico, or Australia for a semester than you would in Lincoln but you probably wouldn't mind.

At one extreme, International Affairs Student Assistant Natalie Hipschman spent a year in France and spent about \$3,000 in extra personal expenses, she said.

"It was a little more expensive because I did a lot of extra traveling," she said. "And I like really good food."

On the other hand, the extra money might not be needed.

At the end of a semester at Monash University, Gray spent two weeks by himself in the Grampian Mountain Range in Australia.

For 14 days, he said, he saw no other human beings, ate only what could fit in his backpack and drank water from mountain streams.

"I wanted to avoid the tourist traps so I found an inexpensive way to explore Australia when the semester ended," he said. "The best way to do that was on my own two feet."

That was just one of the many adventures he told me about that had me muttering "G'day mate" in my sleep.

What I'm getting at is that studying abroad is a good idea — for your pocketbook, your academic career and maybe most importantly, your state of being.

But my friends have visited just a few of the countries that offer exchange programs with UNL.

For those who can speak and understand Spanish, there are intensive language courses and exciting opportunities awaiting in Monterrey and Queretaro, Mexico.

For those who enjoy the German language, the University of Heidelberg offers a broad spectrum of courses that would satisfy many general requirements for a UNL student studying abroad.

And in most cases, scholarships and financial aid are able to travel with you.

It's up to you where you want to go.

So stop on in the Office of International Affairs and take a quick peek around the world. Someone would be glad to be your guide.

And don't worry, they won't check for your passport at the door.

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