

...Of environmental concern

By KATHLEEN MONJE
Of the Emerald

Jim Redden, state attorney general, announced last week his office will investigate seven large dairies for alleged deceptive ice cream packaging.

Redden said his Consumer Protection Division will begin investigating complaints that dairies sprinkle an extra amount of ingredients under the clear windows found on ice cream packages.

"These extra 'garnishes' create a false impression of the concentration of the ingredients actually found in the produce," Redden said.

Several dairies have already admitted using the method, Redden said, adding he is hopeful all producers using similar practices will voluntarily cease and desist.

"We are after these 'window packages' that misrepresent the product. More often than not, there is much less there than meets the eye," Redden said.

The practice not only misrepresents the product, but also increases the unit price and creates general mistrust in the marketplace, according to Redden.

Lane County Audubon Society Participants in a "Local Owling Trip" will observe screech, saw whet, great horned, barn owls and other nightbird owl species common to this area.

The group will meet at the South Eugene High School parking lot at 8 p.m. Wednesday. Larry McQueen, local owl expert, will lead the group, calling the owls to close range for observation.

He advises participants to bring flashlights and binoculars. More information is available from Jean Wojack, field trip chairer, at 343-1322.

A new agricultural project at Oregon State University (OSU) will take three years to determine whether the U.S. production of 100 million tons of sewage sludge

can be safely used to fertilize food crops.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded the study with a \$292,000 grant — the EPA is presently involved in setting criteria for environmentally sound sewage processing across the country.

"Sludge, particularly from industrialized areas, can contain appreciable amounts of heavy metals and edible plants such as lettuce and spinach could accumulate excessive concentration of these metals," says Donald Buhler, OSU agricultural chemist. "Some heavy metals, such as cadmium, are dangerous to human health."

Buhler and Ian Tinsley, a fellow Agricultural Experiment Station researcher, will feed rats diets of wheat flour, carrots, lettuce, spinach, soybeans or tomatoes. All the plants will be grown in soil containing added cadmium.

They hope to find how readily cadmium is accumulated from the

plants and whether different methods of food storage and preparation have an effect on the intake of heavy metals by the rats.

"This research may help identify potentially dangerous agricul-

tural practices and suggest ways to minimize the consequences of heavy metal contamination in our food supplies," Buhler says.

A pre-hearing conference on Pacific Power and Light's (PP&L) proposed home insulation program has been scheduled for Thursday by Charles David, Oregon Public Utility commissioner.

The proposed PP&L program will arrange and pay for insulation improvements to single family homes and duplexes in the state. The utility would extend an interest-free loan to the rate-payer to cover the costs, payable when the home is sold or transferred.

"Persons wishing to participate in the hearing should attend the conference," Davis says. The conference will determine the issues and set the date of the hearing.

It will be held in Salem, in Room D of the Labor and Industries Bldg., at 9:30 a.m.

Gates wins writing prize

Charlene Gates, a student at the University, has won honorable mention in the fourth annual Datsun Student Writing Competition. In the nation-wide competition, the best essays on travel in America were selected.

"America: The Datsun Student Travel Guide," is a free travel magazine for college students, available on 230 campuses, including this one. "America," now in its fifth year of publication, contains current information, first-hand accounts and ideas for student travelers.

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