

County assistance illegal, state's attorney says

# Migrant workers camp can't get needed funding

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A migrant workers camp near Cobden can not get financial help from Union and Jackson Counties, according to a legal opinion.

The Jackson County state's attorney has advised the Board of Supervisors the board legally cannot give money to the camp since the Illinois statutes do not provide for it.

The Union County Board of Commissioners had taken a request for financial help under advisement until the legal opinion was issued in Jackson

County. The board planned to follow Jackson County's decision.

The Union-Jackson Farm Laborers Association, camp operators, asked for \$6,000 from each camp.

The funds were requested when a third straight short fruit crop appeared likely in the two counties.

The camp was constructed from a \$175,000 grant and \$175,000 loan from the Farmers Home Administration and is op-

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erated from rent from migrant workers.

Dan McGuire, an association member, said the financial picture has improved slightly since the request for funds and the camp "maybe can sweat through" this year.

He said the apple crop will be better than it appeared in March when a cold snap hit the area lowering temperatures to four and five degrees in the two counties.

An early apple crop is harvested in late June and a late

apple crop in early September.

McGuire said more vegetables are being planted this year, because of heavy damage to the peach crop and suspected heavy damage to the apple crop.

Workers are arriving to work in the vegetable fields and early apple orchards, McGuire said.

Rent from workers in the early apple crop and vegetable crop may carry the camp over to the late apple crop, he said.

If necessary, camp operators will ask fruit and vegetable

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growers for rent advances to get the camp through, McGuire said.

In the state's attorney's opinion, it was suggested camp operator may apply to a community action agency for help.

The camp, which opened in 1971, has 36 three-room apartments. Growers pay \$2 daily rent for each workers.

The camp was constructed when housing regulations became too strict for individual growers to provide adequate housing.