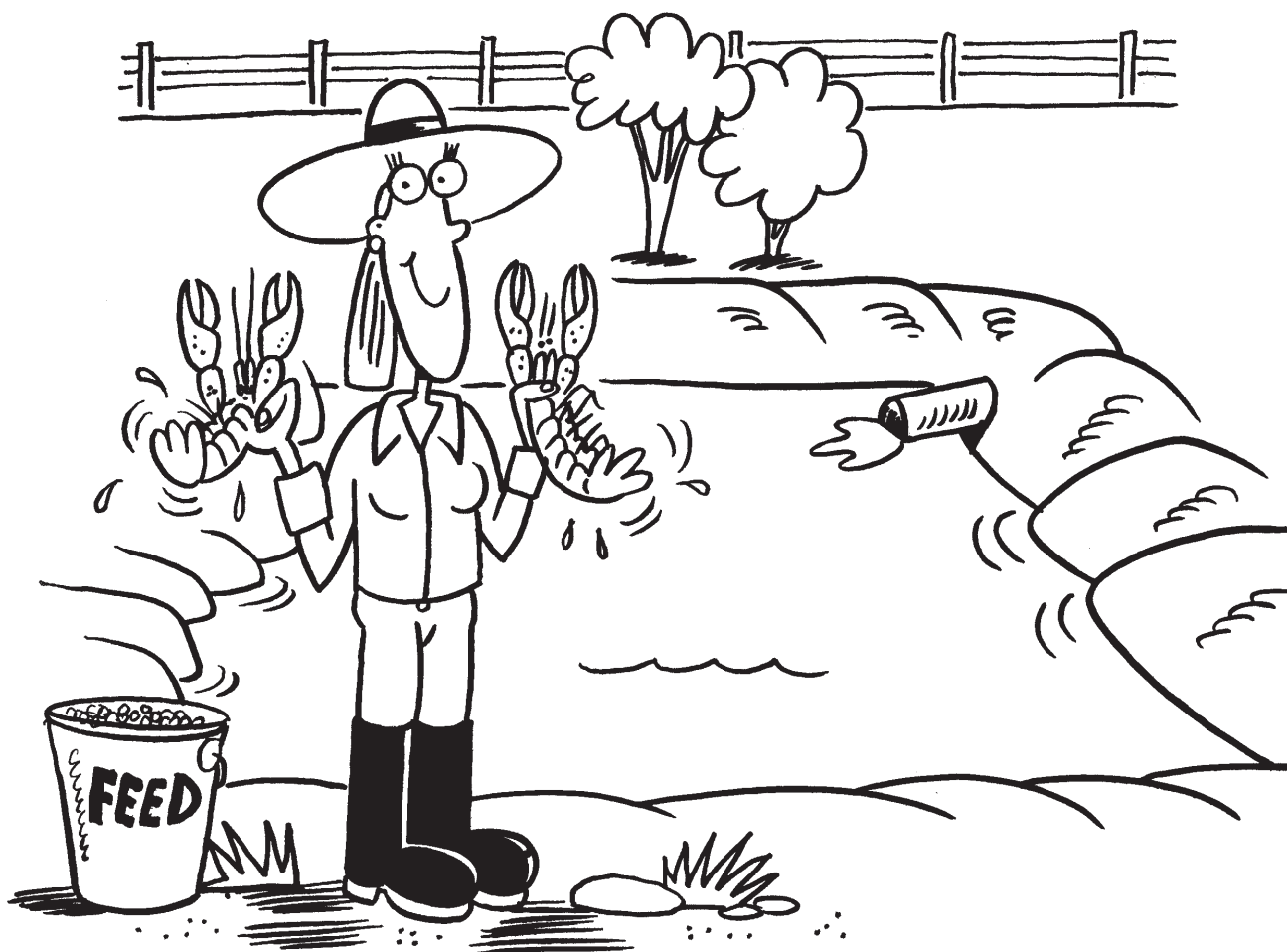


# Aqua Info

AQUA INFO NUMBER 32

## FARMING YABBIES AFTER THE DROUGHT



Many farm dams used for growing yabbies in WA have been severely affected by the drought that has ravaged the State for the past couple of years. Now, with many areas enjoying decent rainfall, dams have refilled and farmers can start harvesting yabbies again. This handout provides some tips on harvesting strategies and other management regimes that you can use to maximise your yabby production.

The key issue to consider is whether yabbies survived the drought in individual dams. If they didn't those dams should be restocked to speed up production. Once yabby numbers have recovered, we recommend using stock management methods that avoid allowing excessive numbers of juveniles to build up in the dams, and the retention of the fastest growing yabbies as breeders.

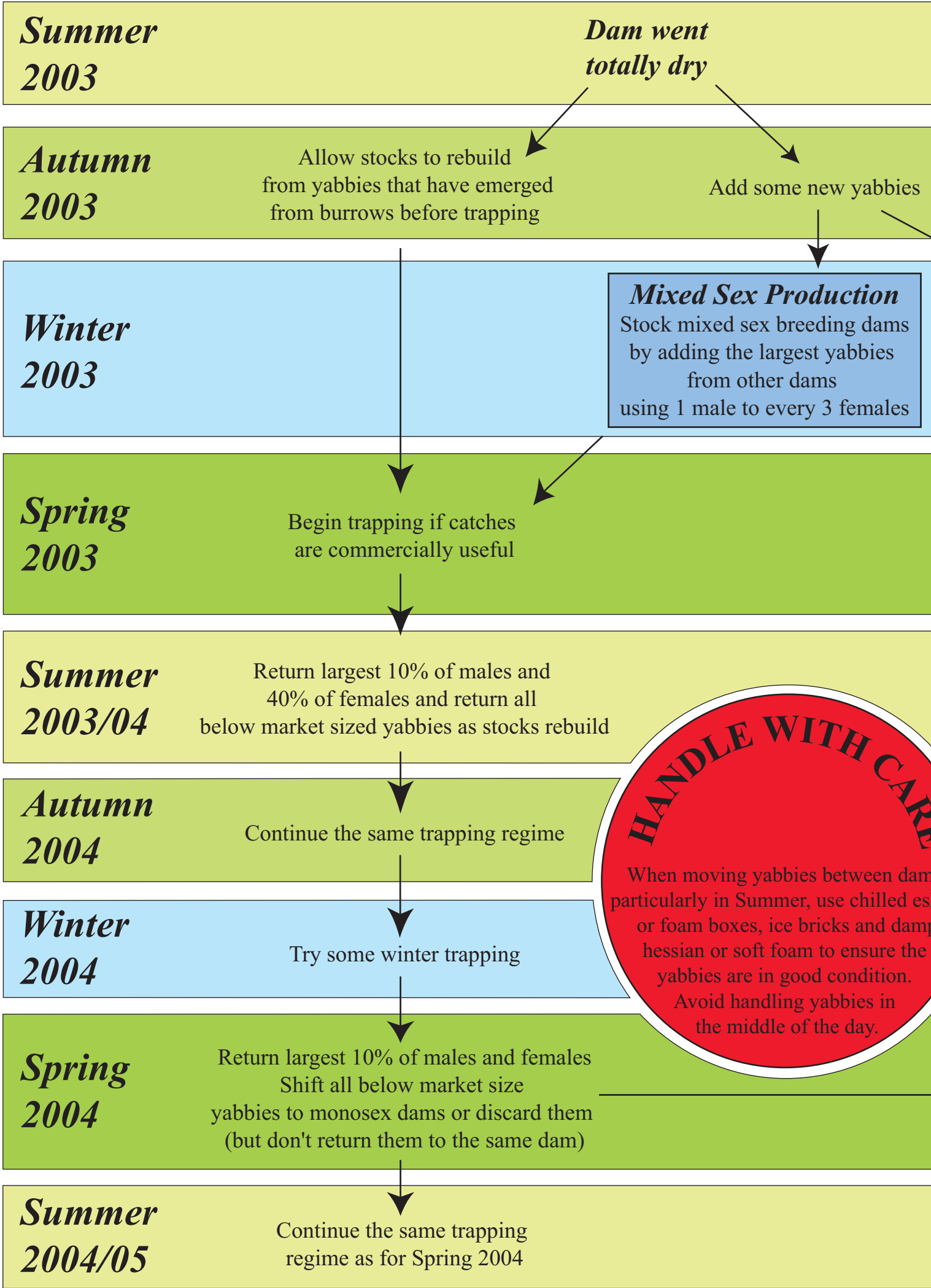


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*Fish for the future*



*Dam didn't completely dry*

Can't catch any yabbies?

Can trap yabbies OK

***Monosex Production***

Stock monosex dams by adding single sex yabbies from other dams at <math><4\text{ per m}^2</math>

Try some winter trapping

Trap and sell all saleable stock (there should be few if any juveniles)  
Remove any yabbies of the opposite sex still in the dam

Trap normally: remove all yabbies except the largest 10% of yabbies. Shift below market size yabbies to monosex dams or discard (but don't return the yabbies to the same dam)

Continue the same trapping regime, replacing trapped yabbies with slightly more (25%) below market size animals to account for deaths due to handling

Continue the same trapping regime

Continue the same trapping regime

Continue the same trapping regime

Try some winter trapping

Try some winter trapping

Continue the same trapping regime

Continue the same trapping regime

Continue the same trapping regime

Continue the same trapping regime

# OTHER USEFUL TIPS AND ADVICE

## SHIFTING YABBIES

When shifting yabbies between dams, be careful to observe the restrictions in place because of *Thelohania* and the yabby boundary. To protect you, your neighbours and native crayfish stocks, avoid moving any yabbies onto or off of your property, and do not move any yabbies west of the Albany Highway. For more information please refer to the brochure *Thelohania, A Threat to Marron and Yabbies*, available through Department of Fisheries or on the internet at <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/sf/broc/notification/index.html>

## FEEDING

Dams that have refilled with water are likely to have some natural feeds washed in as well. While this provides some food for the yabbies, it is also worthwhile adding artificial feeds to help promote growth. The following rates are recommended.

Freshwater crayfish pellets		OR	Lupins*	
Season	Feed rate kg/1000m <sup>2</sup> dam/week		Season	Feed rate kg/1000m <sup>2</sup> dam/week
Spring	7.5		Spring	10
Summer	6		Summer	8
Autumn	3		Autumn	4
Winter	1.5		Winter	2

*\*The Department of Fisheries recommends use of freshwater crayfish pellets rather than lupins, however lupins are preferable to not feeding, and are popular with some farmers.*

## TRAPPING

More traps will produce more yabbies, so when you are harvesting try to use as many traps as possible in each dam. One trap every 10 paces is a good start.

## SALTY DAMS

Dams with salinity levels between 2 – 6 parts per thousand (or 140 – 420 grains/gallon) may be suitable for growing yabbies but not for breeding them. These dams are a good place to put your surplus juvenile yabbies (eg. those caught in other dams with too many small yabbies).

## MONOSEX DAMS

Some farmers are prepared to sex yabbies to obtain better growth rates from monosex dams. These dams are also a good place to put spare juvenile yabbies trapped from mixed sex dams (see Aquainfo #25 for more information).

## RECOMMENDED READING

(The following references are available for borrowing from the Department of Fisheries Library, via your local library)

Lawrence, C.S. and Bellanger, J.E. 2001. How to Grow Bigger Yabbies. Aquainfo 25, Fisheries WA, North Beach 6020. 7 pp.

Lawrence C.S., Cheng, Y.W., Bellanger, J.E., and Maguire, G.B. 2002. Feeding and Management Practices to Enhance Yabby Production from Farm Dams. Fisheries Contract Report No. 1. 206 pp.

Lawrence C.S. & Morrissy, N.M. 2000. *Yabby Farming – Frequently asked Questions*. Fisheries WA, Perth, Western Australia. 56 pp. Also available for purchase through <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/shop/>

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