

Food Web Overview

A food web is made up of many different parts or chains and represents the hierarchical relationships between organisms in an ecosystem. Using the sun, producers can make their own food through the process of photosynthesis. Producers are organisms like plants and are at the lowest level of the food web. A consumer is an organism that cannot produce its own food and must eat other organisms to gain energy. A primary consumer is an animal that only eats producers, better known as an herbivore. Moving up the chain, a secondary consumer is an animal that eats primary consumers (carnivore). At the top is a tertiary consumer, an animal that eats herbivores and carnivores, with little to no threat of being eaten by other animals. Scavengers are organisms like bacteria, fungi, or animals like vultures, that return energy back to its lowest level for producers to use. As organisms in the chain are eaten, energy is passed. As it passes from organism to organism more and more energy is lost. Producers start with 100% of the energy, from then only 10% is passed on at each level (10% to 1% to .1%). This means that organisms higher in the chain must eat more in order to gain more energy while organisms lower in the chain are able to eat less.

Directions: Draw a line to match the vocabulary word with its correct definition:

Vocabulary Word	Definition
Primary Consumer	Return energy to lowest level
Producer	Have little to no predators
Scavenger	Herbivore
Secondary Consumer	Make their own food
Tertiary Consumer	Eat primary consumers

Directions: Create a **Food Web** by drawing arrows that show which way the energy would flow from organism to organism. Start with the sun and draw arrows from there. Try to create as many food chains as possible. Webs form where food chains overlap or connect.

