

# Food Chains and Webs

**Producers**

**Primary**

**Consumers**

**Secondary**

**Consumers**

**Tertiary**

**Consumers**



PLANTS ARE PRODUCERS.  
YOU WILL FIND PLANTS  
IN EVERY ECOSYSTEM.

# Another Link in the Food Chain

Everyone plays a specific role in the food chain of life. You might be a human thinking they are king of the hill or you might be a bacterium under the feet.

You are very important to the survival of the system no matter what role you play.

# *Food Chains and Webs*

You will see the terms food chains and food webs. They describe the same series of events that happen when one organism consumes another to survive.

**Food web** is a more accurate term since every organism is involved with several other organisms.

# The Producers

Producers are the beginning of a simple food chain. Producers are plants and vegetables.



# The Producers

All energy comes from the Sun and plants are the ones who make food with that energy. They use the process of photosynthesis. Plants also make loads of other nutrients for other organisms to eat.





# The Consumers

Consumers are the next link in a food chain. There are three levels of consumers.

## Primary consumers (1<sup>st</sup> Order)

- Worms, insects, squirrels, mice: all eat plants (**HERBIVORES**) ex: squirrel eats acorns

## Secondary consumers (2<sup>nd</sup> Order)

- Eat the primary consumers (**CARNIVORES**) example: cat eats squirrel

## Tertiary consumers (3<sup>rd</sup> order)

- Eat the primary and secondary consumers (**CARNIVORES**) ex: wolf eats cat and squirrel

**Omnivores eat both  
plants and meat**

**–They can be EITHER  
primary or secondary  
consumers.**

# Scavengers

=They eat the **remains** of **dead** organisms **left** by the consumers

- vultures, coyotes,  
hyenas

# The Decomposers

The last links in the chain are the decomposers. (They break things down) Like bacteria, mold, fungi, mushrooms

- If you die, they eat you.
- If you poop, they eat that.
- If you lose a leaf, they eat it.

**Whenever something that was alive dies, the decomposers get it.**

**Decomposers break down nutrients in the dead "stuff" and return it to the soil.**

**The producers can then use the nutrients and elements once it's in the soil.**

**The decomposers complete the system, returning essential molecules to the producers.**

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