

## Food Chains

View it at [www.sciencemusicvideos.com](http://www.sciencemusicvideos.com)

Glenn Wolkenfeld © 1989

Sung to the tune of *The Ballad of Jed Clampett* (also known as *The Beverly Hillbillies Song*) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0\\_XAPku7SgE&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0_XAPku7SgE&feature=related)

Oh, a nuclear reaction happens deep inside the sun,  
When hydrogen atoms are fused into helium  
And then the heat and light is radiated into space,  
In 90 million miles it shines upon the Earth's face.

For every hundred calories that shine out from the sun,  
The calories that green plants trap will number only one,  
But every single calorie in oceans, hills, and plains,  
Will serve as a foundation for a living food chain.

At the bottom of a food chain are producers like green plants  
Whose cells make food from sunlight making use of chloroplasts,  
It happens in the pines and flowers on your windowsill,  
'Cause every single green plant's got a little chlorophyll.

Well the next step in a food chain is a primary consumer,  
An herbivoric cow or vegetarian baby boomer,  
A primary consumer spends its mealtimes eating plants,  
It might be a buffalo or might be an ant.

Each level in a food chain yields only ten percent  
Of the former level's energy you might ask where it went  
There are bones and leaves you can't digest that really make a dent  
And don't ignore the weighty cost of metabolic rent.

So if your plants are yielding 'bout a hundred calories,  
Your yield will only be ten in the birdies and the bees.  
And seven hundred calories in algae in the sea  
In primary consumers it will yield you seventy.

Some other ways of getting food are really out of sight.  
You could be a predator or be a parasite,  
A predator eats meat a parasite eats your insides,  
And if you're a decomposer you will eat me when I die!

And if you know this about food chains you can really take the cake,  
When energy goes through it doesn't last, it dissipates,  
But nutrients in food chains meet a very different fate,  
They recycle and they circulate forever, ain't that great?

Just remember there's no beings in this world that live alone  
Populations form communities where all do make their homes  
Though your niche may be determining the role that you are playing.  
Every creature live or dead is in a food chain.