

Wetland prairie	200	5.022	0.9	162	5.3	15	13.9
Tallgrass prairie	275						

Source: Based on data from Andrzejewska and Gyllenberg 1980.

FOOD CHAINS

Energy fixed by plants is the base on which the rest of life on Earth depends. This energy stored by plants is passed along through the ecosystem in a series of steps of eating and being eaten known as a **food chain**. Feeding relationships within a

food chain are defined in terms of trophic or consumer levels. From a functional rather than a species point of view, all organisms that obtain their energy in the same number of steps from the autotrophs or primary producers belong to the same **trophic level** in the ecosystem. The first trophic level belongs to the primary producers, the second level to the herbivores,

