

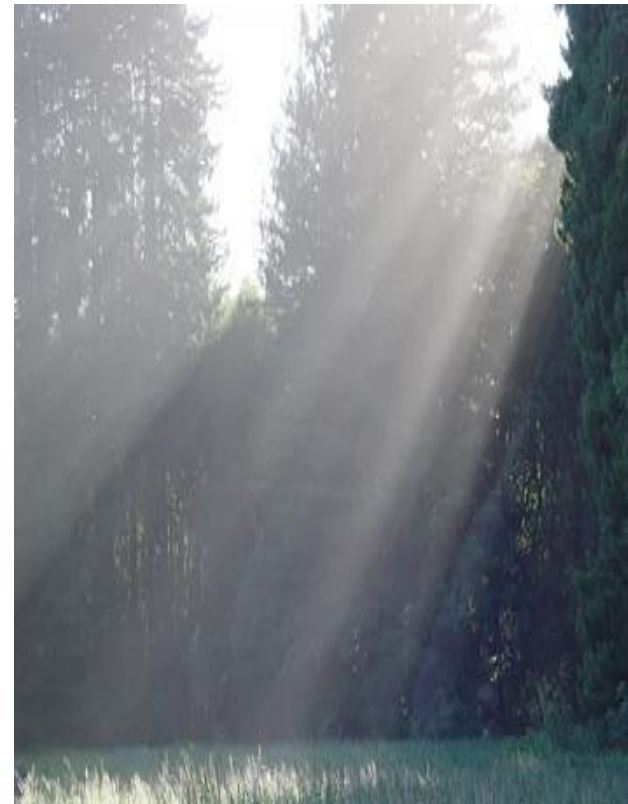
# **PLANT FUNCTIONAL BIOLOGY**

**6 Sem BSc Botany  
Providence Women's College, Kozhikode**

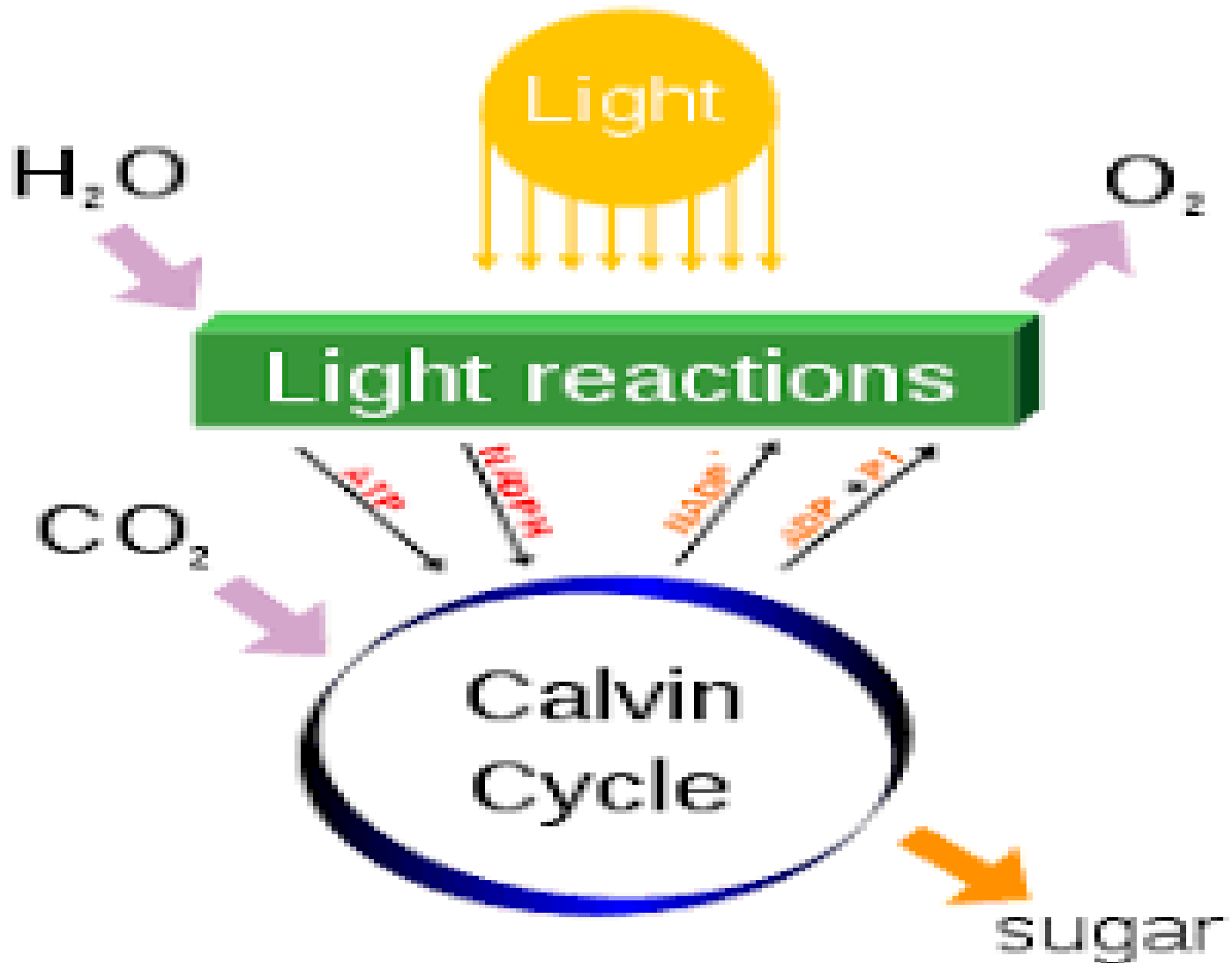
Dr. Deena Meria Jose,  
Associate Professor, Dept.of Botany

# Main source of energy for life on earth

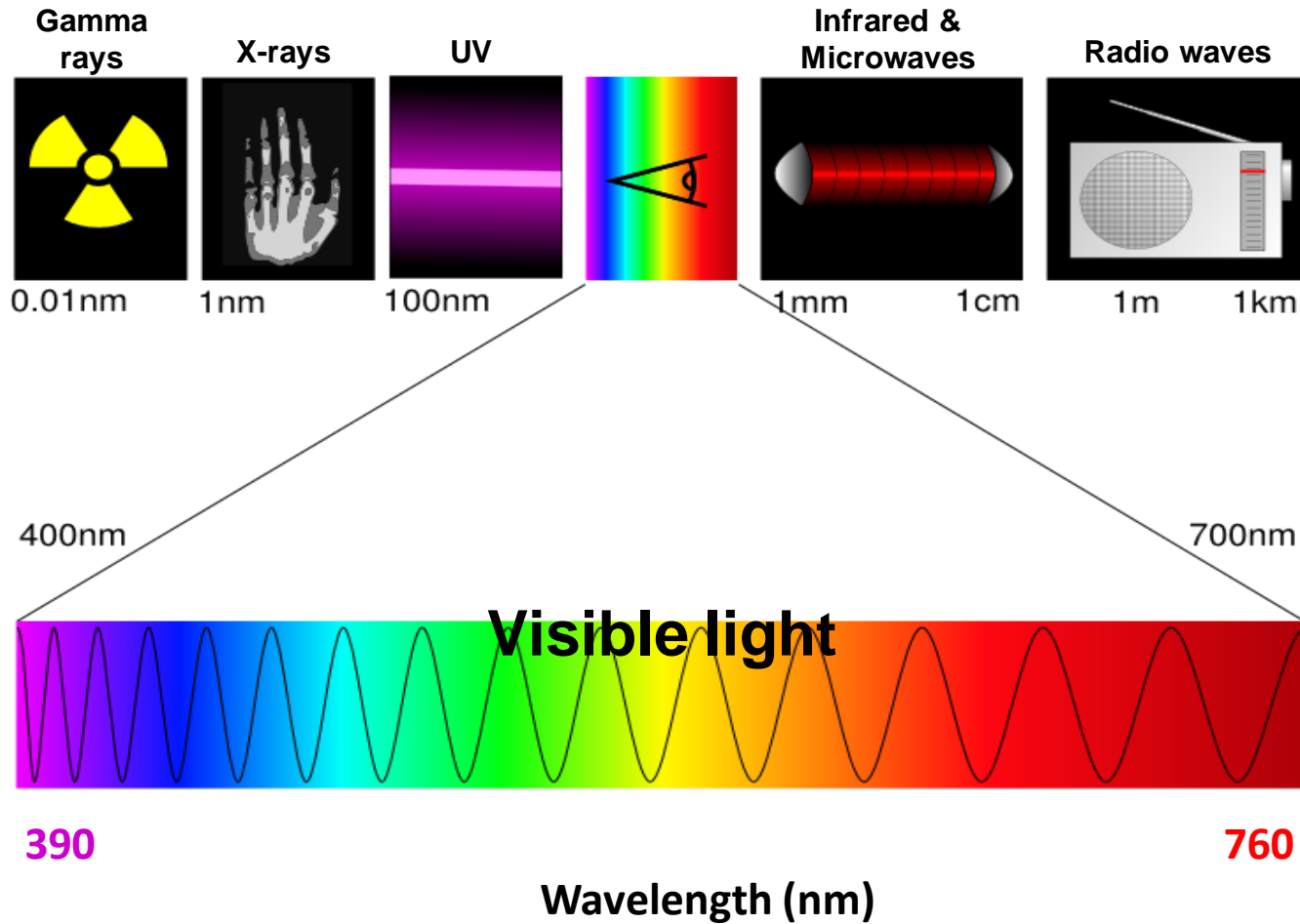
**SUN**

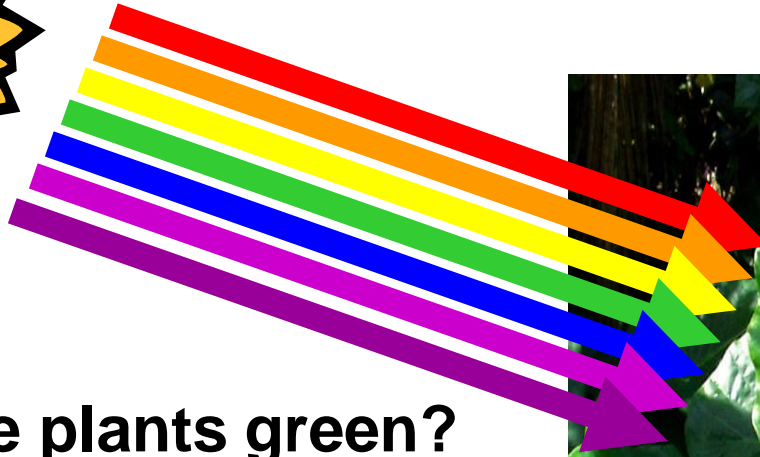
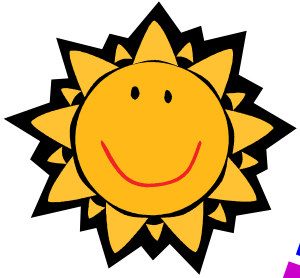


# PHOTOSYNTHESIS



# Electromagnetic Spectrum and Visible Light





**Why are plants green?**



**Reflected light**

# Chloroplast Pigments

- Chloroplasts contain several pigments
  - Chlorophylls a, b, c, d, e, bacteriochlorophyll
  - Carotenoids yellow, orange, brown, red



Figure 7.7

## Chlorophylls

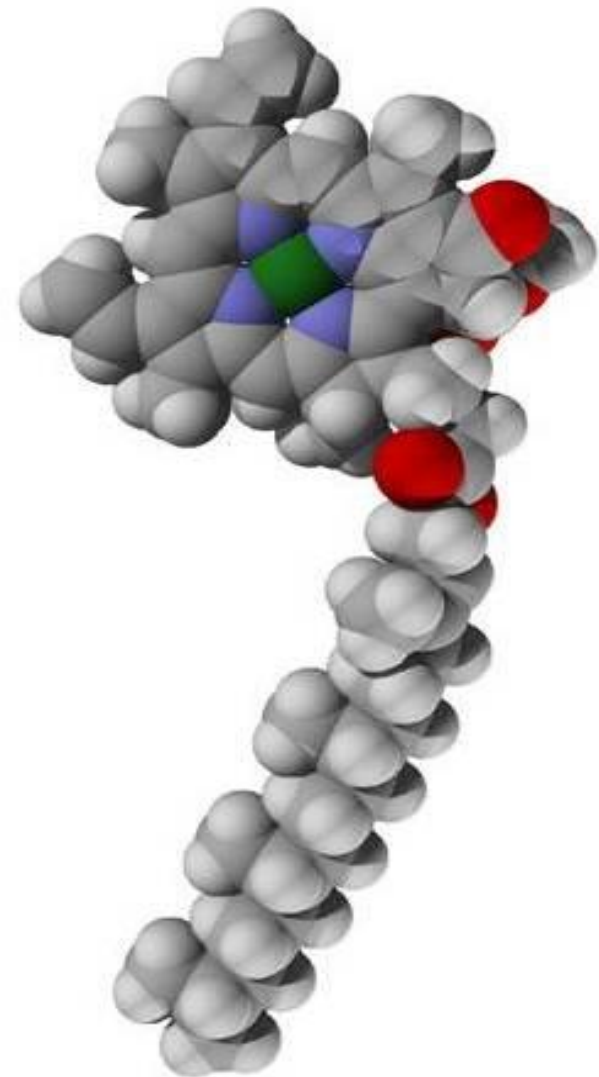
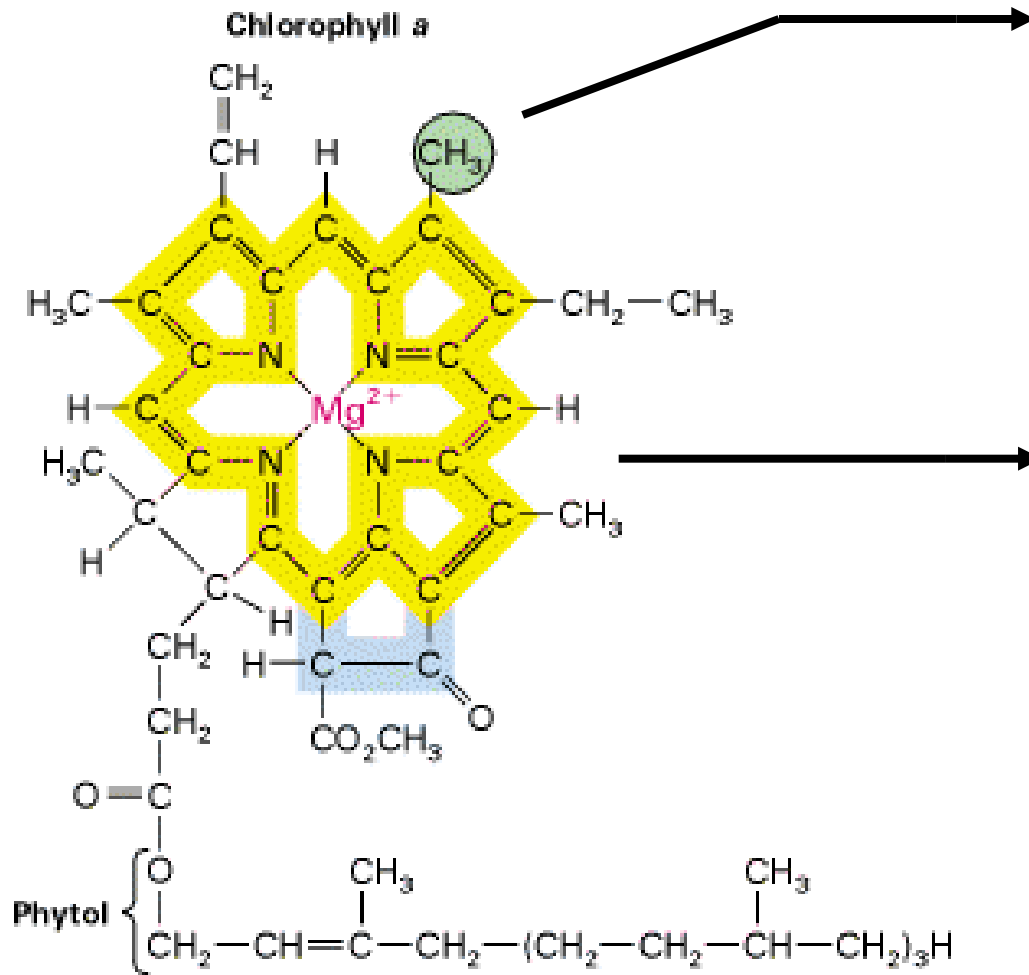
- Principal pigment
- Photochemical reaction only in **chl a**
- Magnesium porphyrin derivatives
- Pyrole head(hydrophobic), phytol tail (hydrophilic)
- Tetrapyrrole ring/ porphyrin ring
- **a**  $C_{55}H_{72}O_5N_4Mg$
- **b**  $C_{55}H_{70}O_6N_4Mg$

## Carotenoids

- Accessory pigments
- Carotenes  $C_{40}H_{56}$  **alpha, beta, gamma, phytoene, lycopene, neurosporene**
- Xanthophylls  $C_{40}H_{56}O_2$  **lutein, violaxanthin, zeaxanthin, neoxanthin**

-

# Chlorophyll a & b

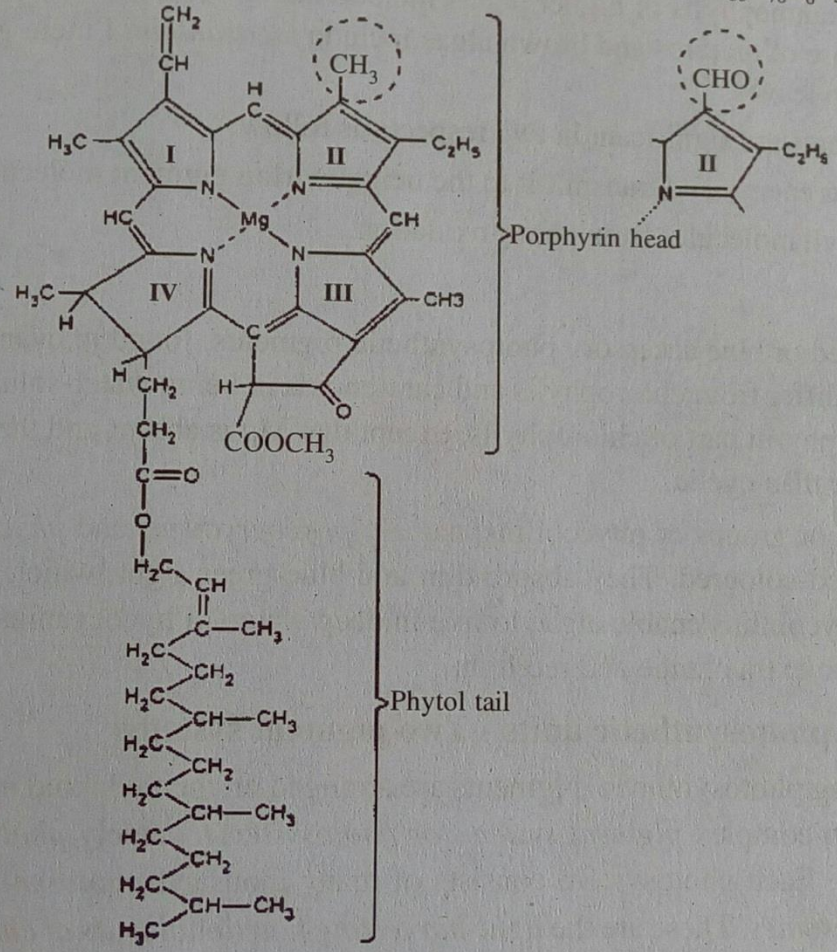


Phytol tail



Chlorophyll-a ( $C_{55}H_{72}O_5N_4Mg$ )

Chlorophyll-b ( $C_{55}H_{70}O_6N_4Mg$ )

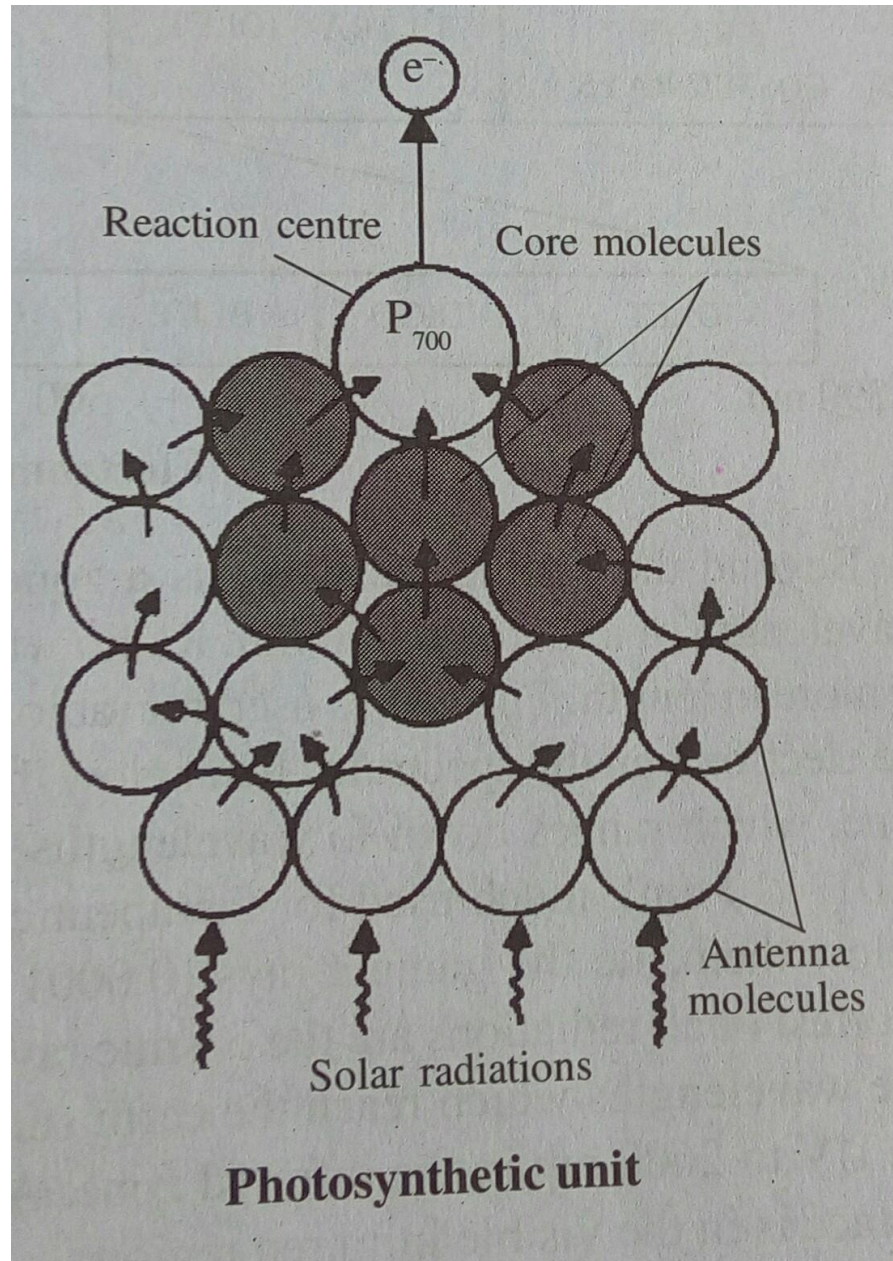


Structural formulae of chlorophyll-a & b

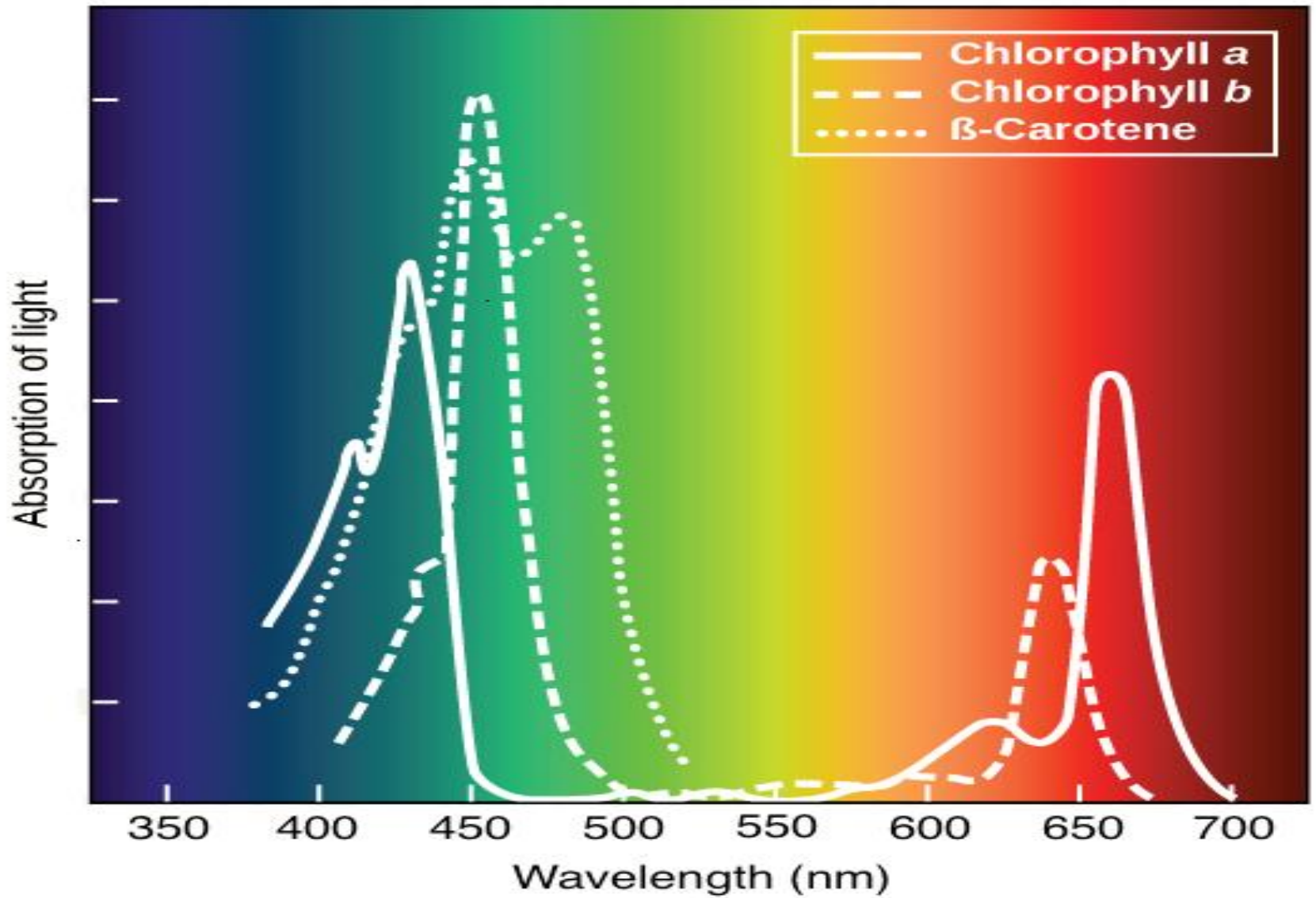
Diff. between Chl a and Chl b

### Some major photosynthetic pigments

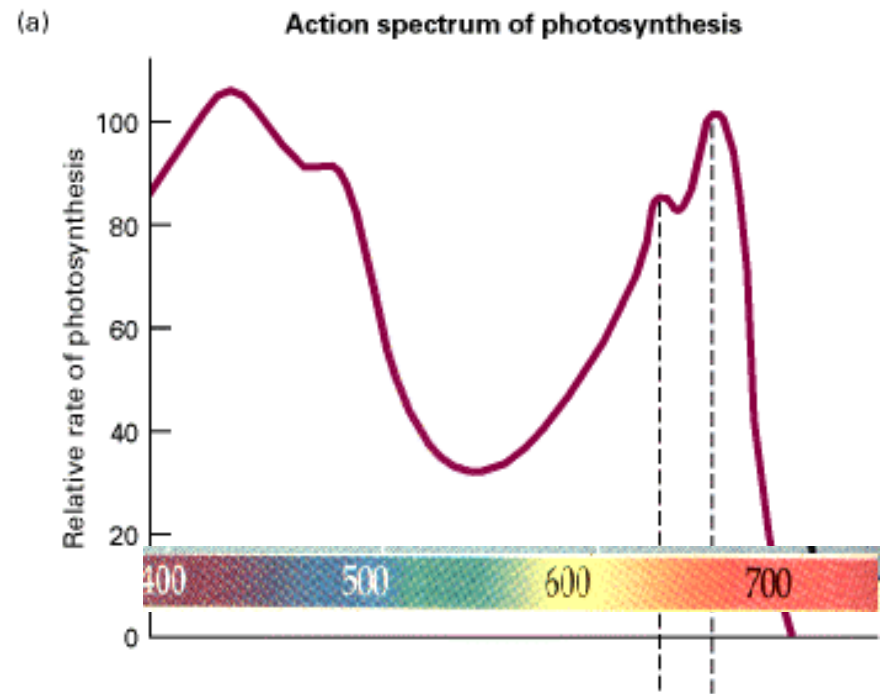
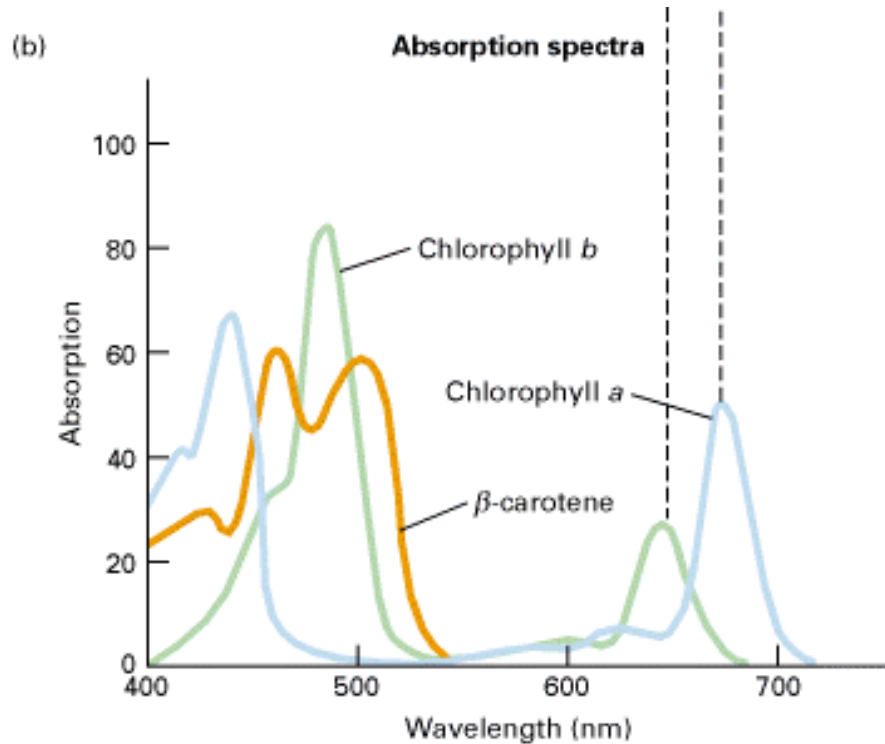
Category	Name	Status	Distribution
A. Chlorophylls	(i) Chlorophyll - a (C <sub>55</sub> H <sub>72</sub> O <sub>5</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Mg)	Principal	All photosynthetic plants
	(ii) Chlorophyll - b (C <sub>55</sub> H <sub>70</sub> O <sub>6</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Mg)	Accessory	Plants, green algae
	(iii) Chlorophyll - c (C <sub>35</sub> H <sub>32</sub> O <sub>5</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Mg)	''	Brown algae, diatoms, dinoflagellates
	(iv) Chlorophyll - d (C <sub>35</sub> H <sub>70</sub> O <sub>6</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Mg)	''	Some red algae
	(v) Bacteriochlorophyll (C <sub>55</sub> H <sub>74</sub> O <sub>6</sub> N <sub>4</sub> Mg)	Principal	Purple & green bacteria
	(vi) Chlorobium chlorophyll (Bacterioviridin)	''	Green bacteria
B. Carotenoids	(i) Carotenes	Accessory	Photosynthetic plants
	(ii) Xanthophylls	Accessory	''
C. Phycobilins	(i) Phycoerythrin	Accessory	Red algae & Cyanobacteria
	(ii) Phycocyanin	''	''
D. Rhodopsin	Bacteriorhodopsin	Principal	Halobacteria



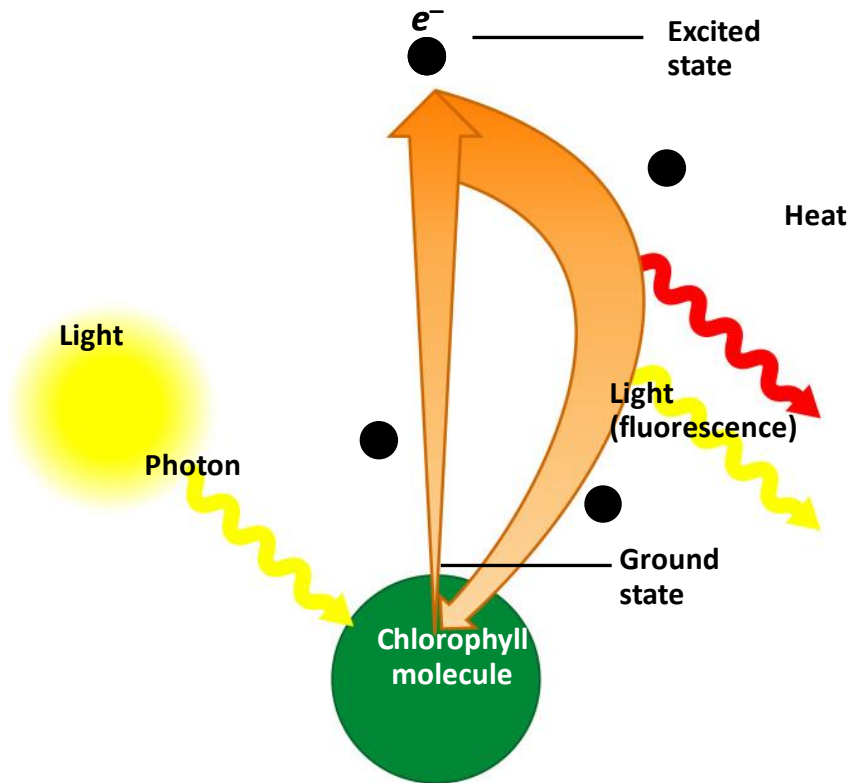
# Absorption Spectra of Pigments



# Different pigments absorb light differently

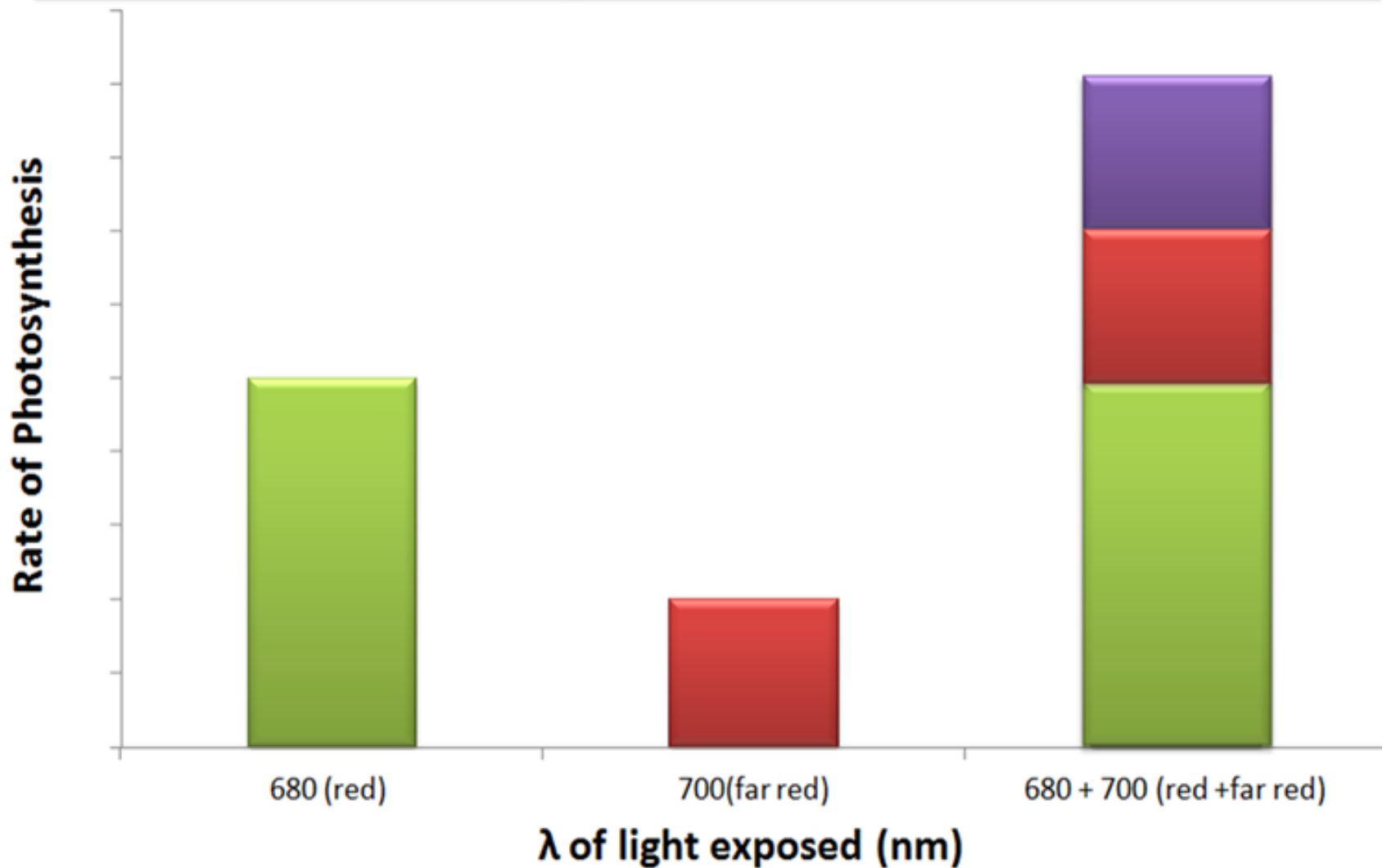


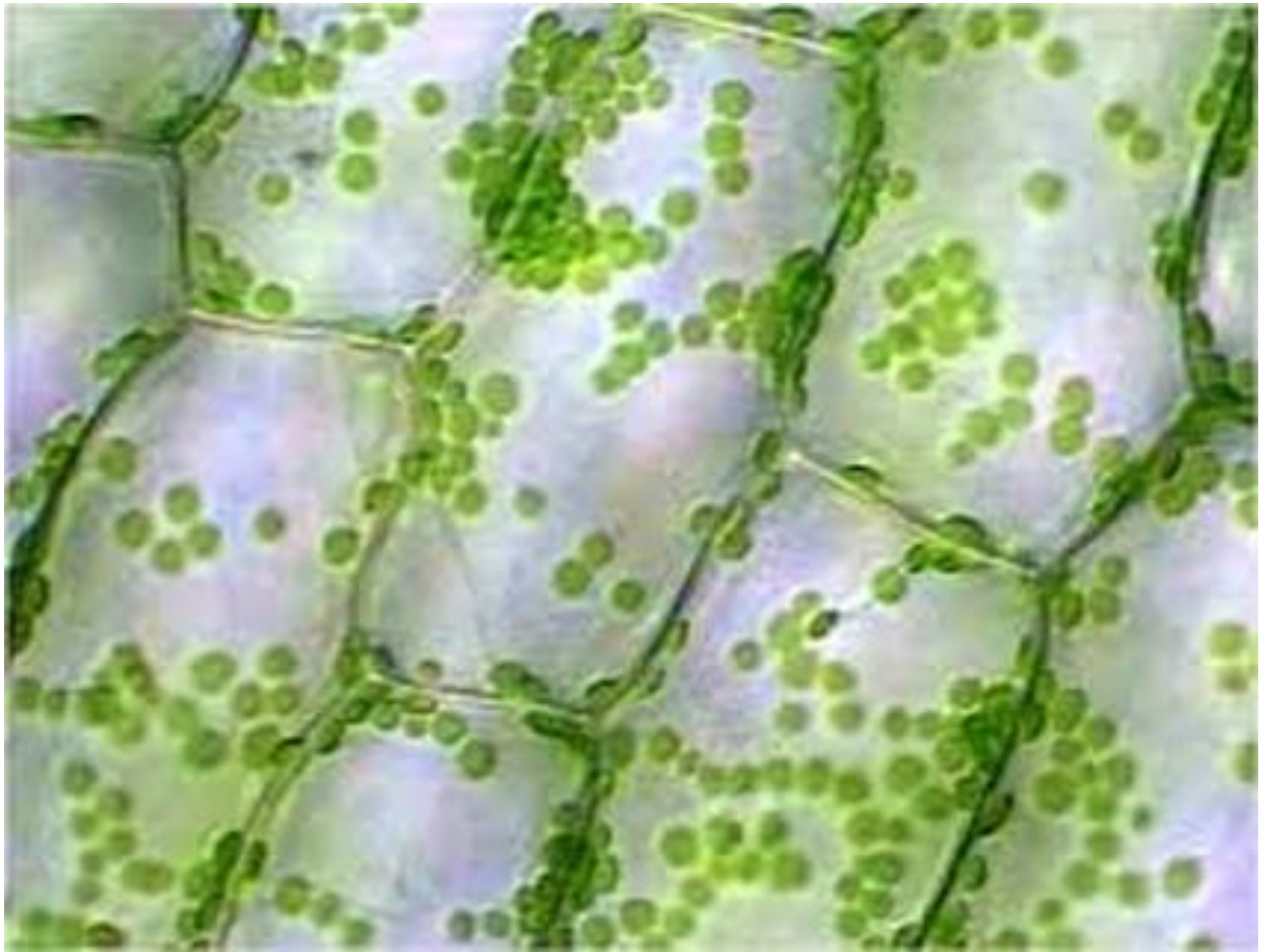
# Excitation of chlorophyll in a chloroplast



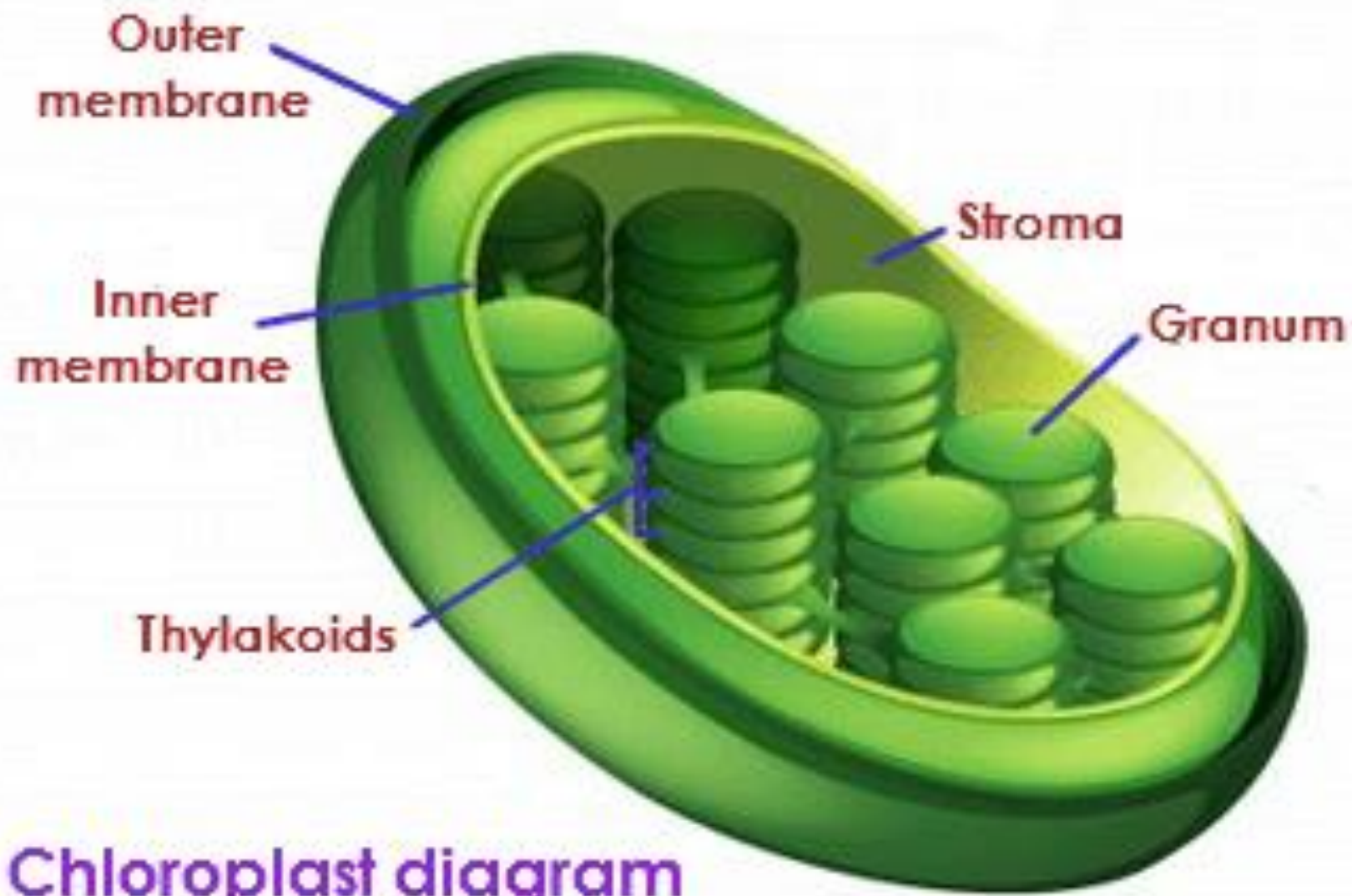
(a) Absorption of a photon

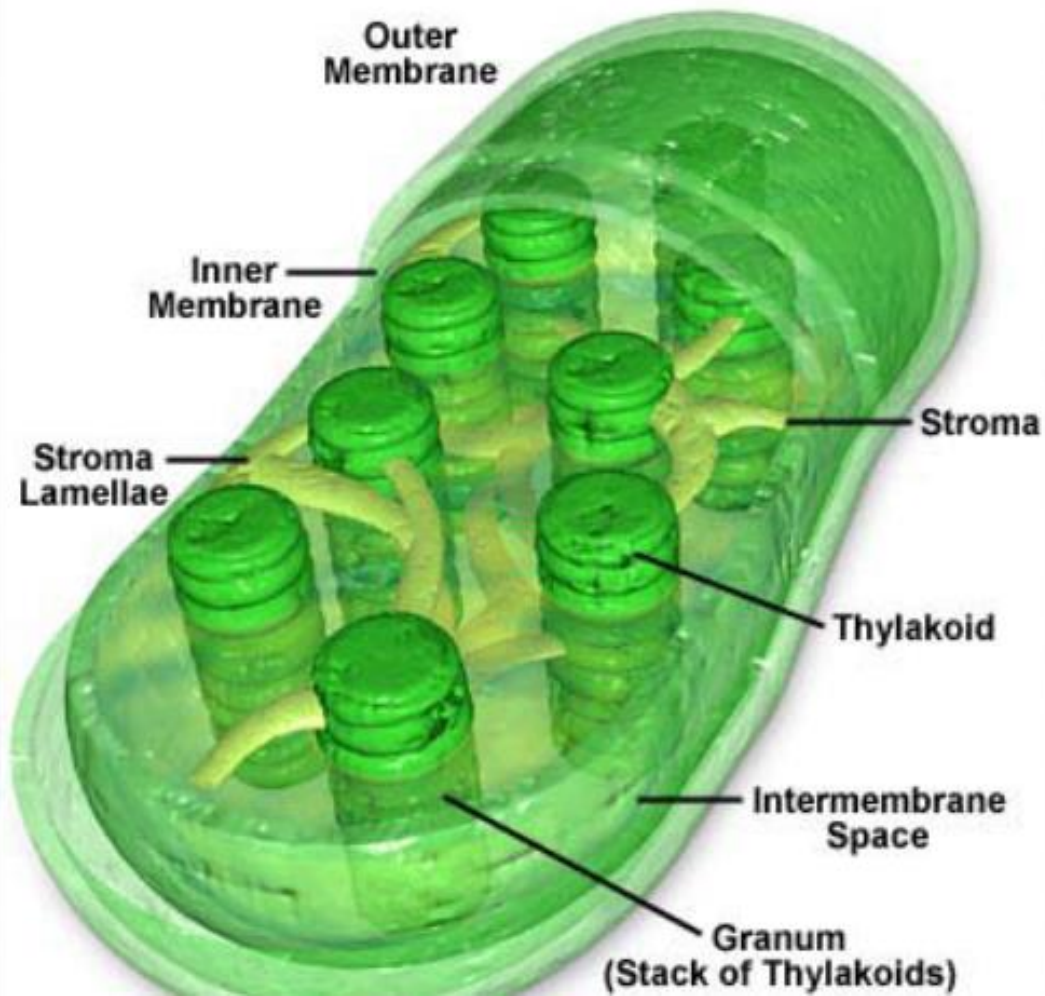
# Emerson Red Drop and Enhancement Effect

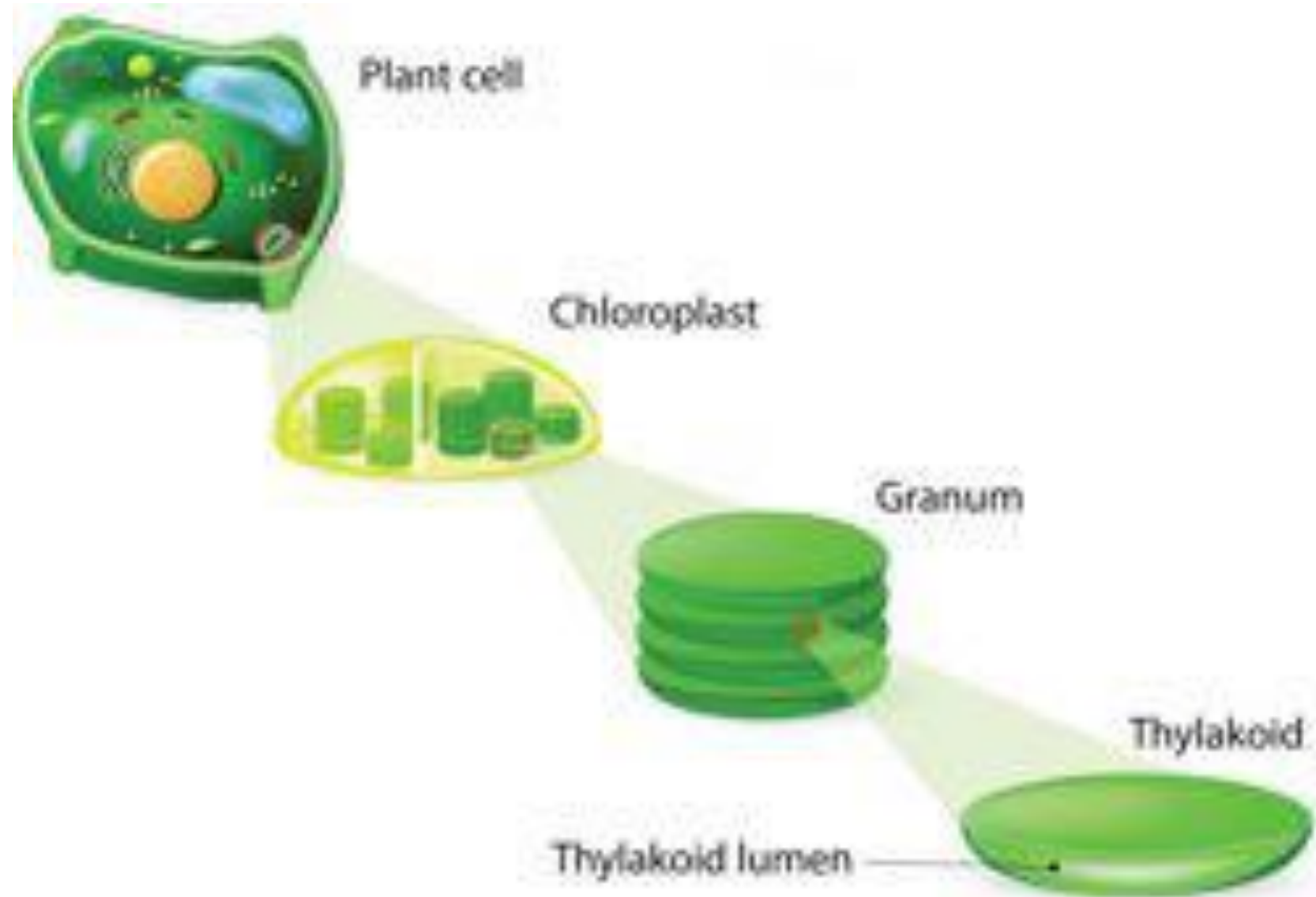


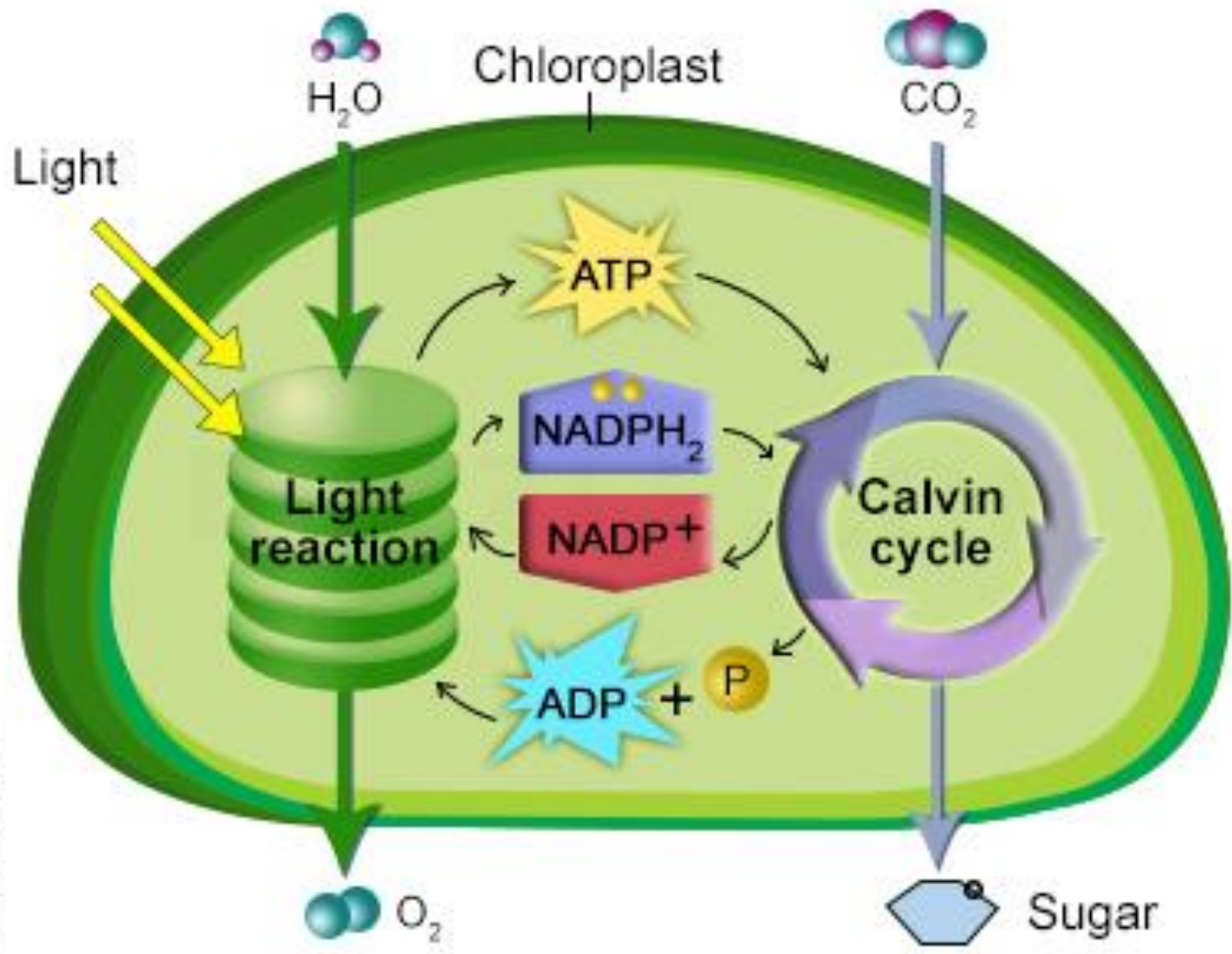




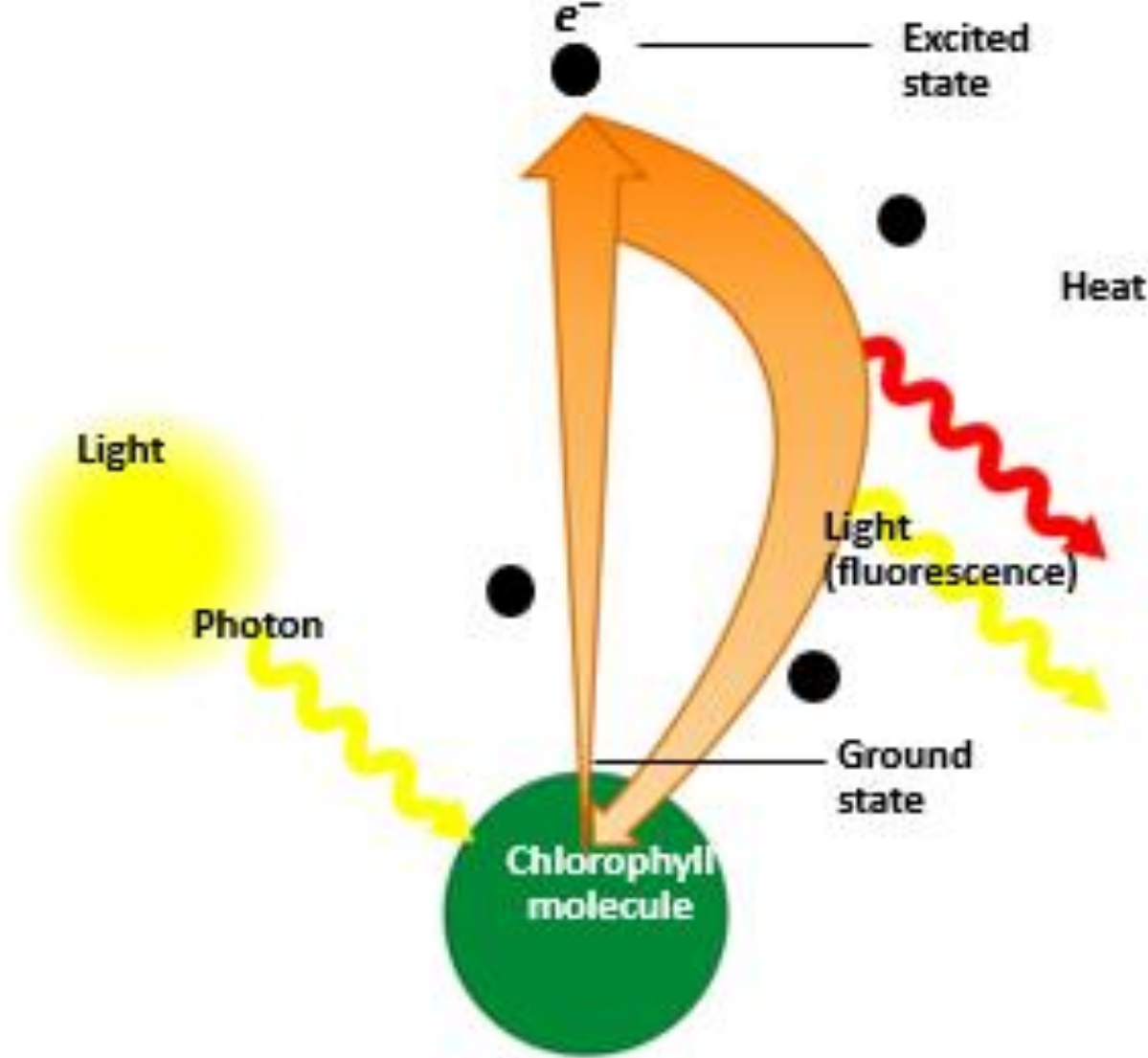






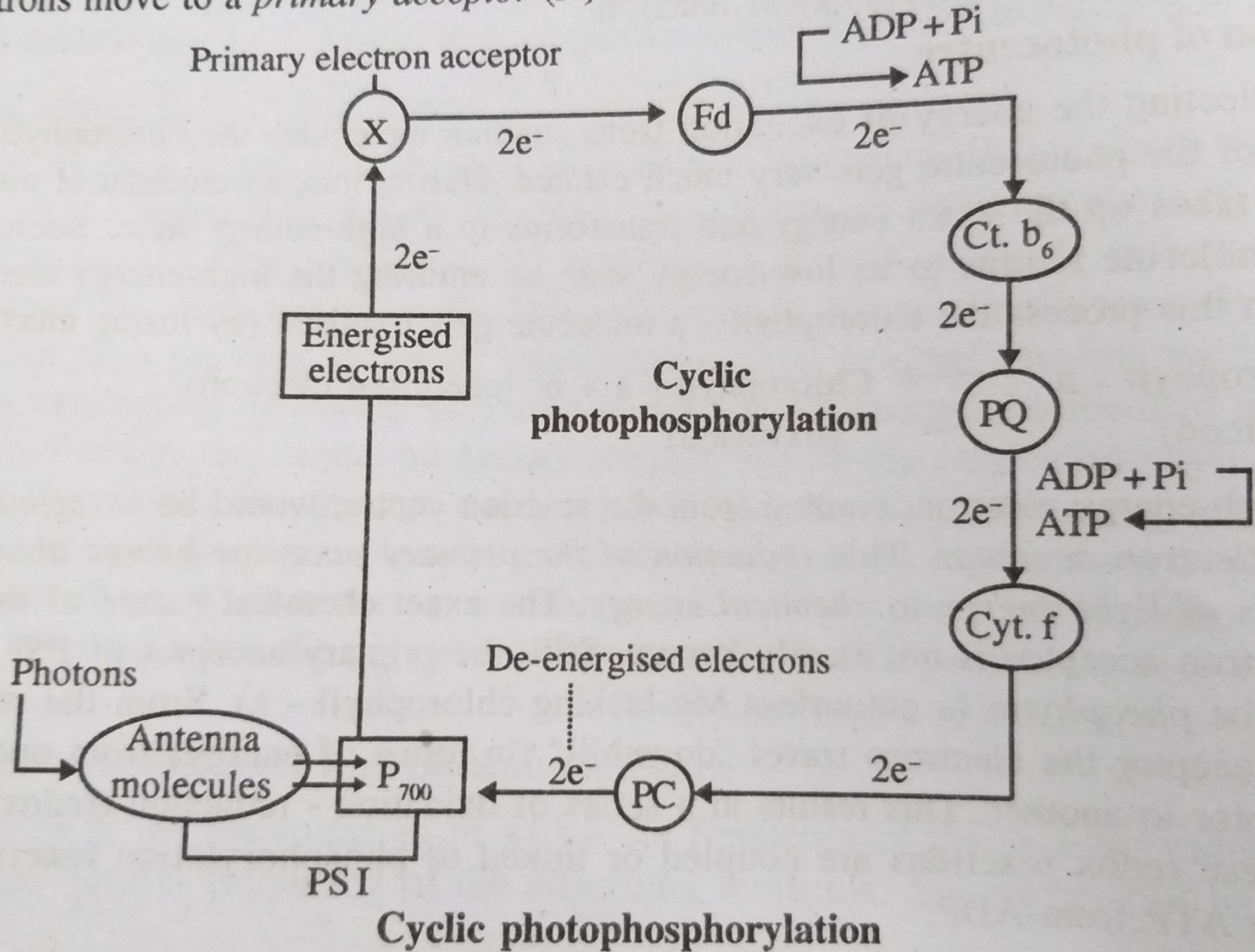


# Excitation of chlorophyll in a chloroplast



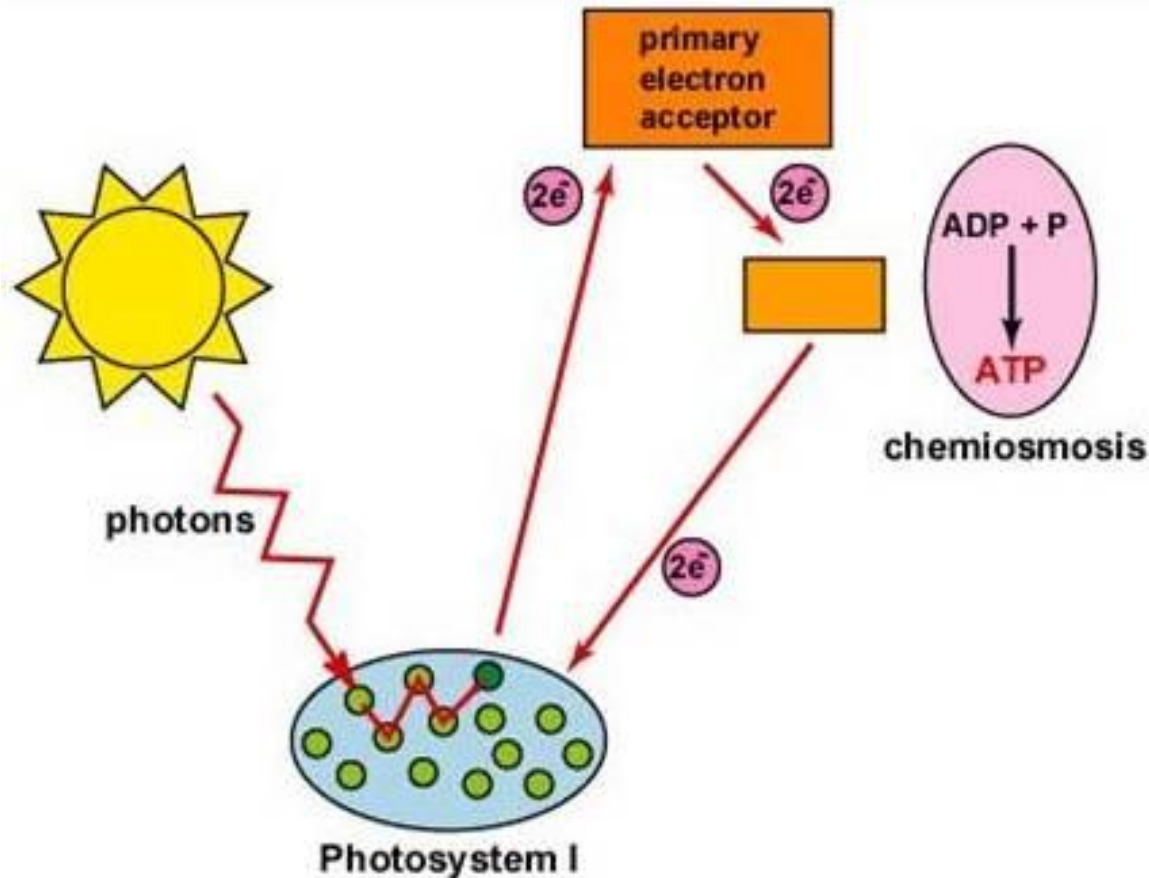
(a) Absorption of a photon

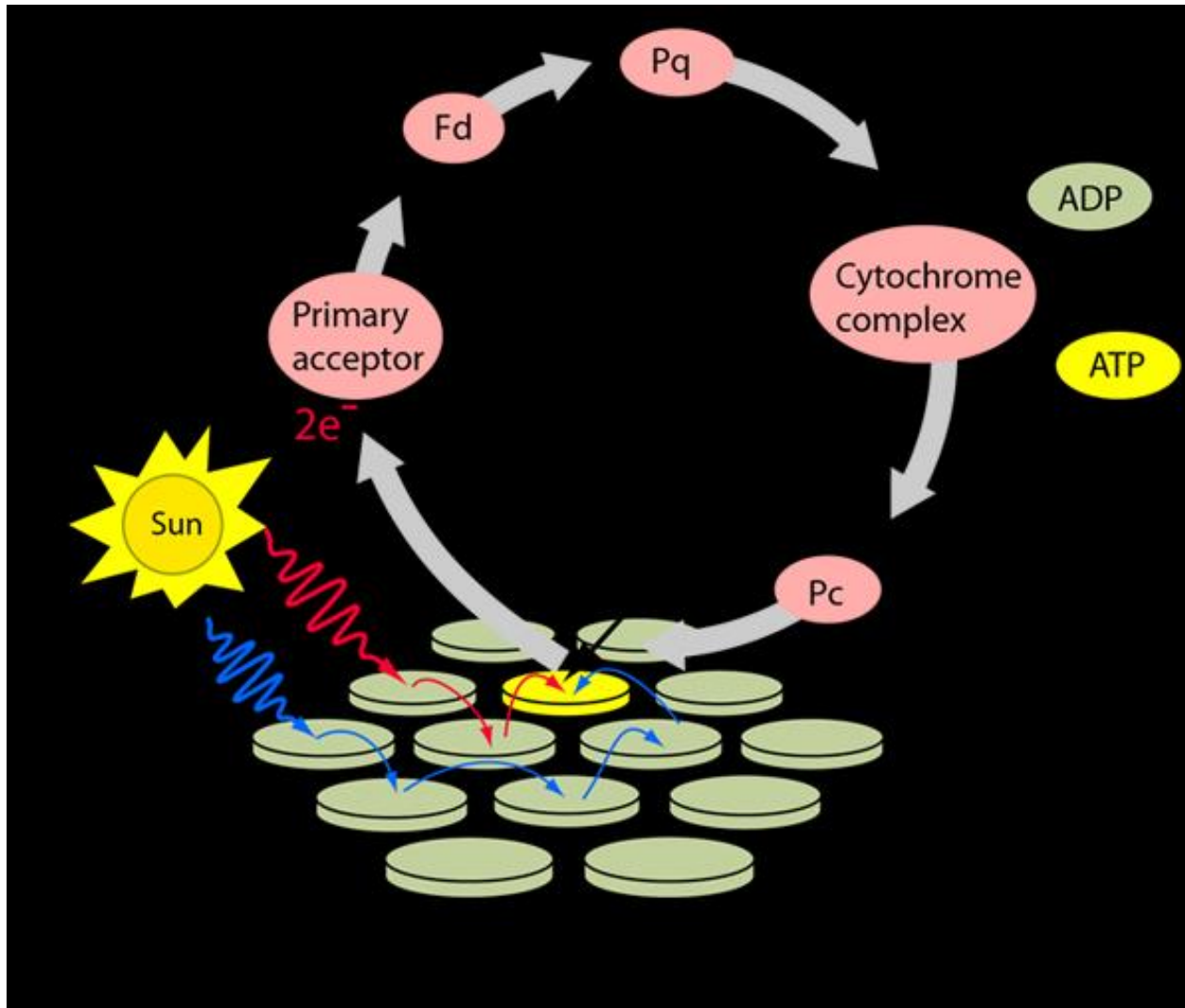
electrons move to a primary acceptor (X)



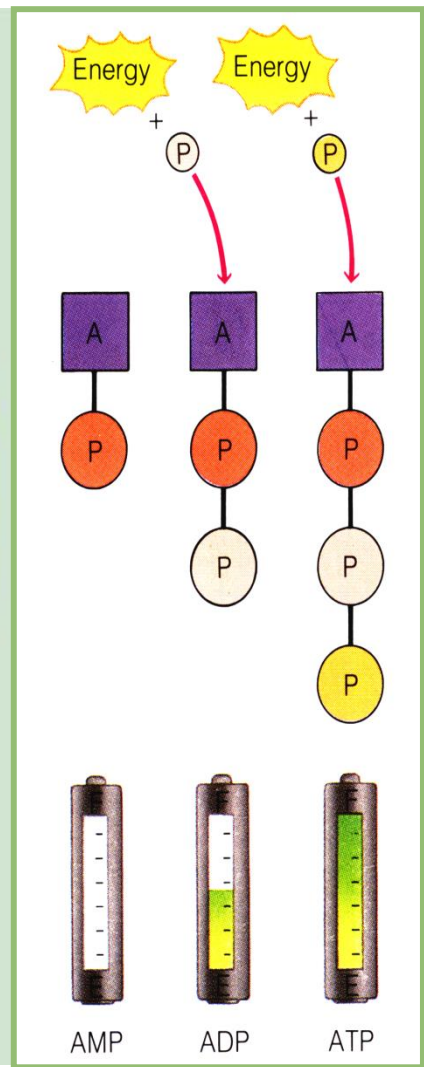
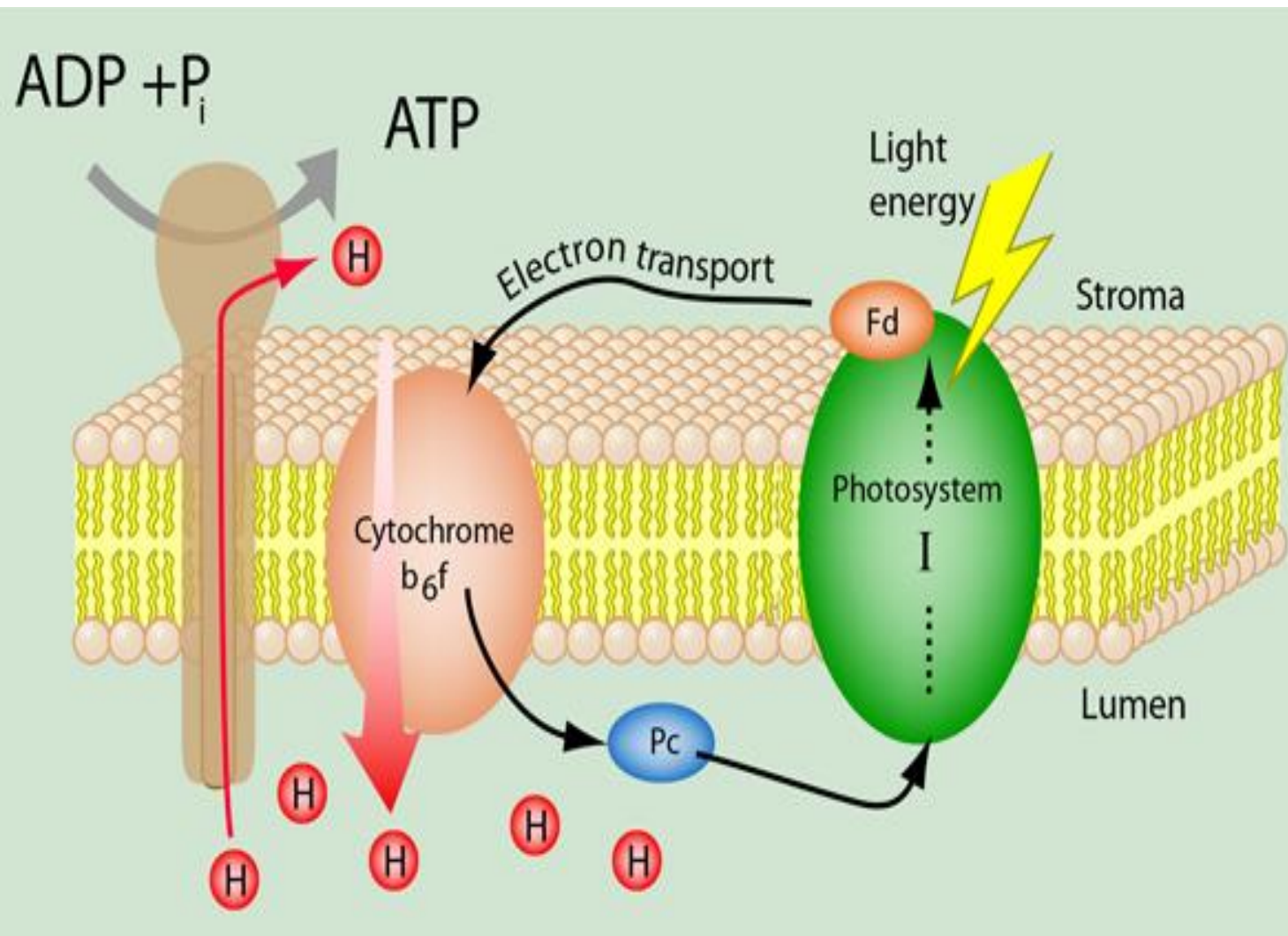
# Cyclic Photophosphorylation

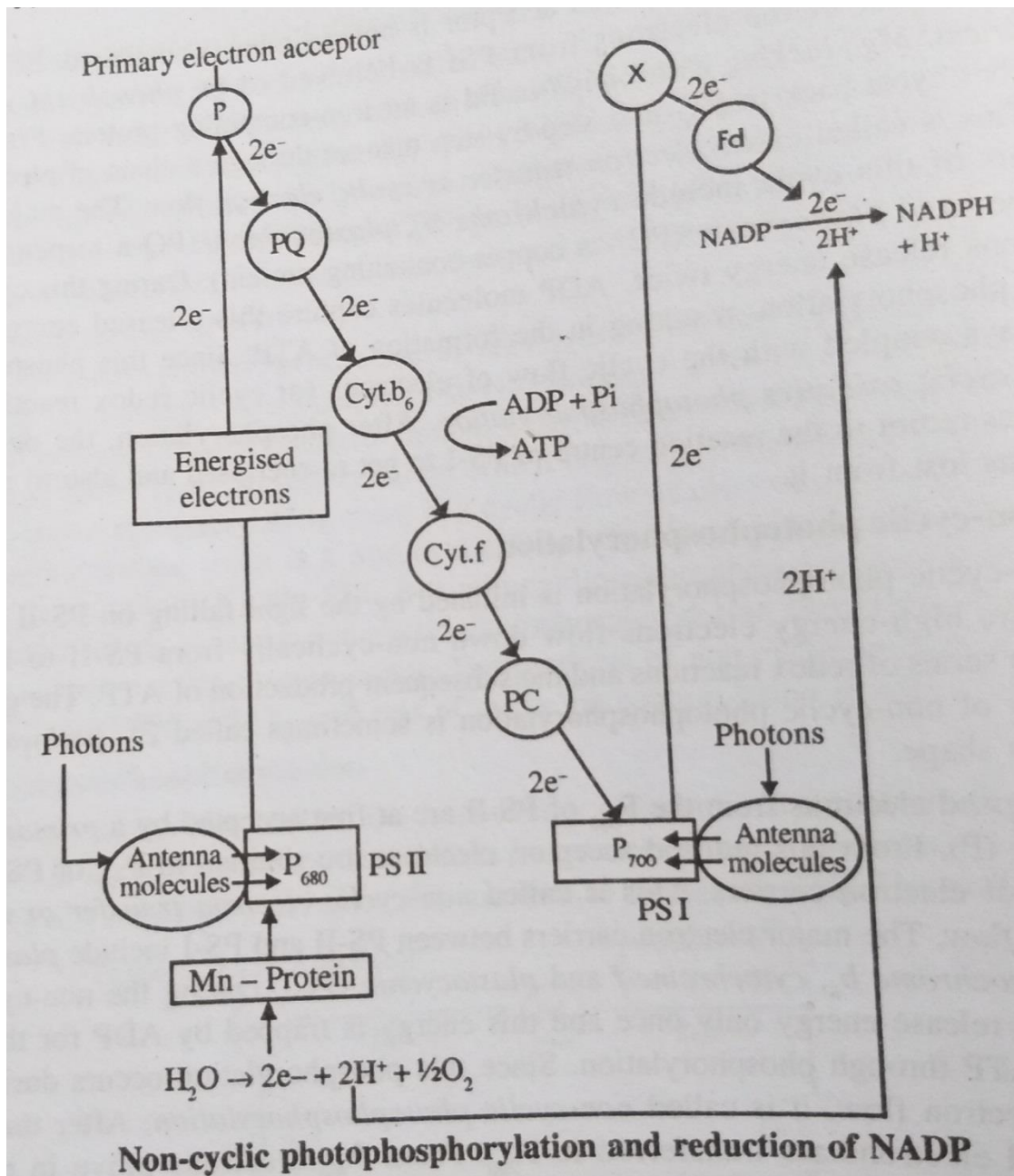
- Process for ATP generation associated with some Photosynthetic Bacteria
- Reaction Center => 700 nm





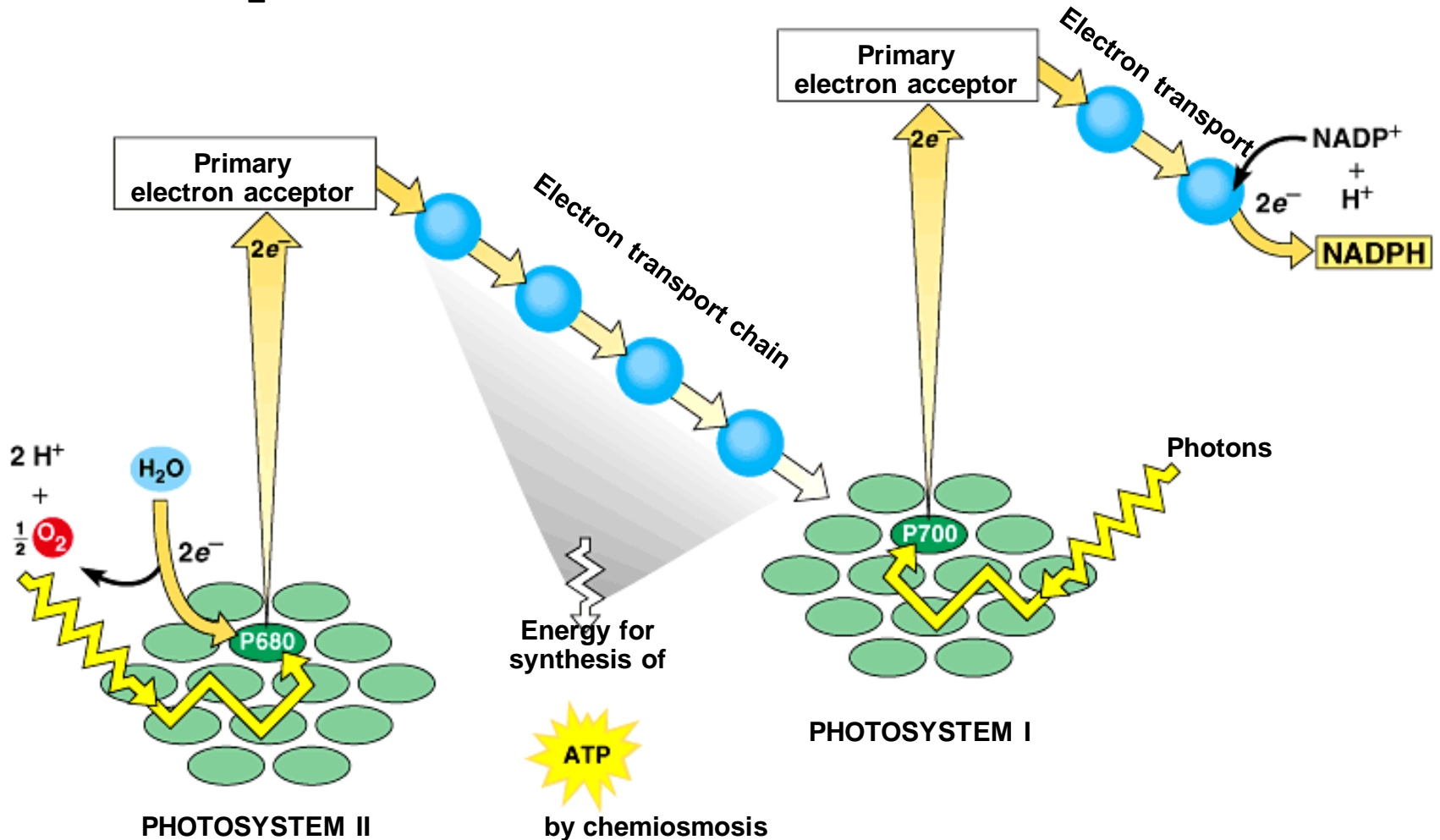




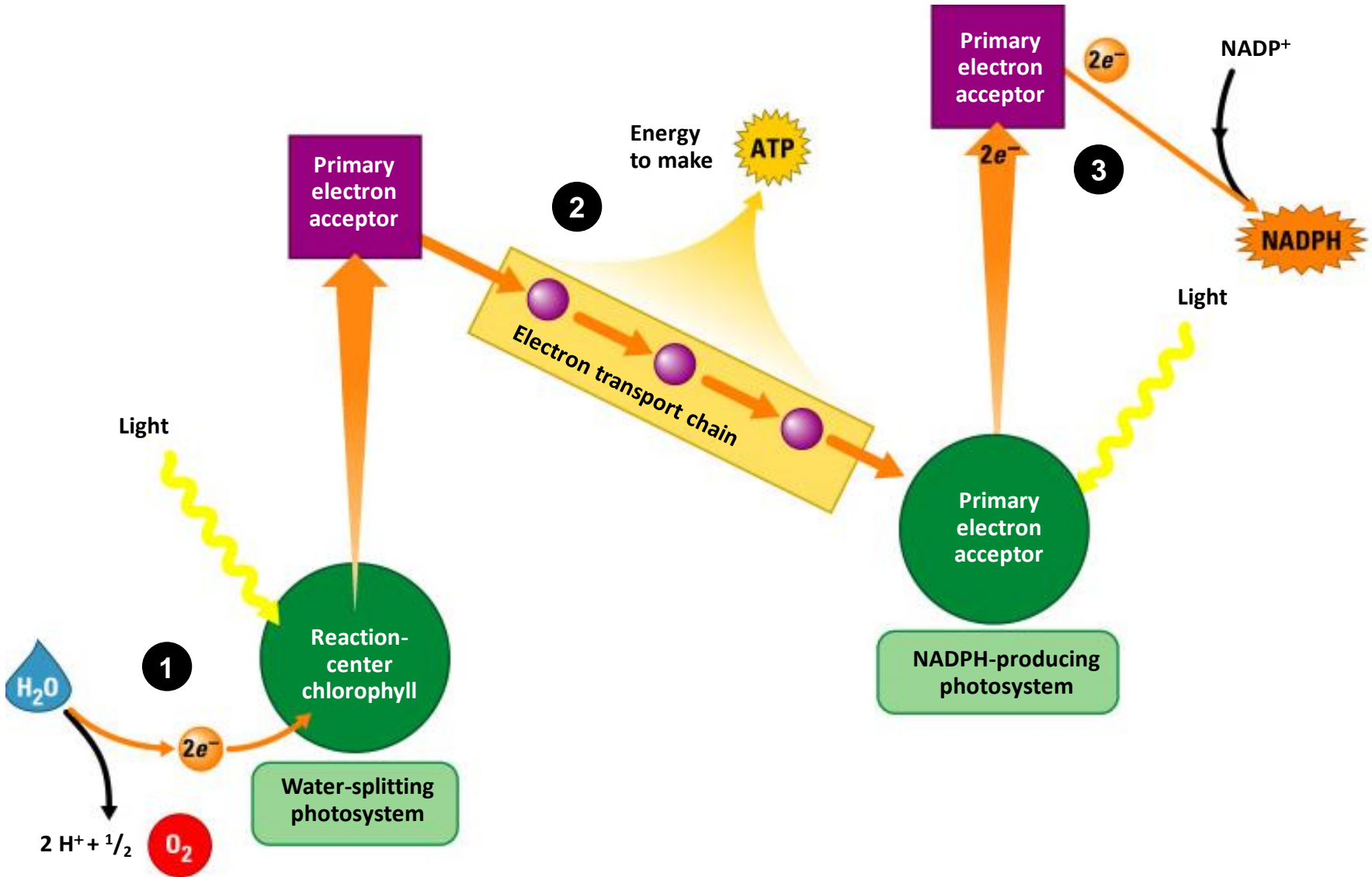


# Noncyclic Photophosphorylation

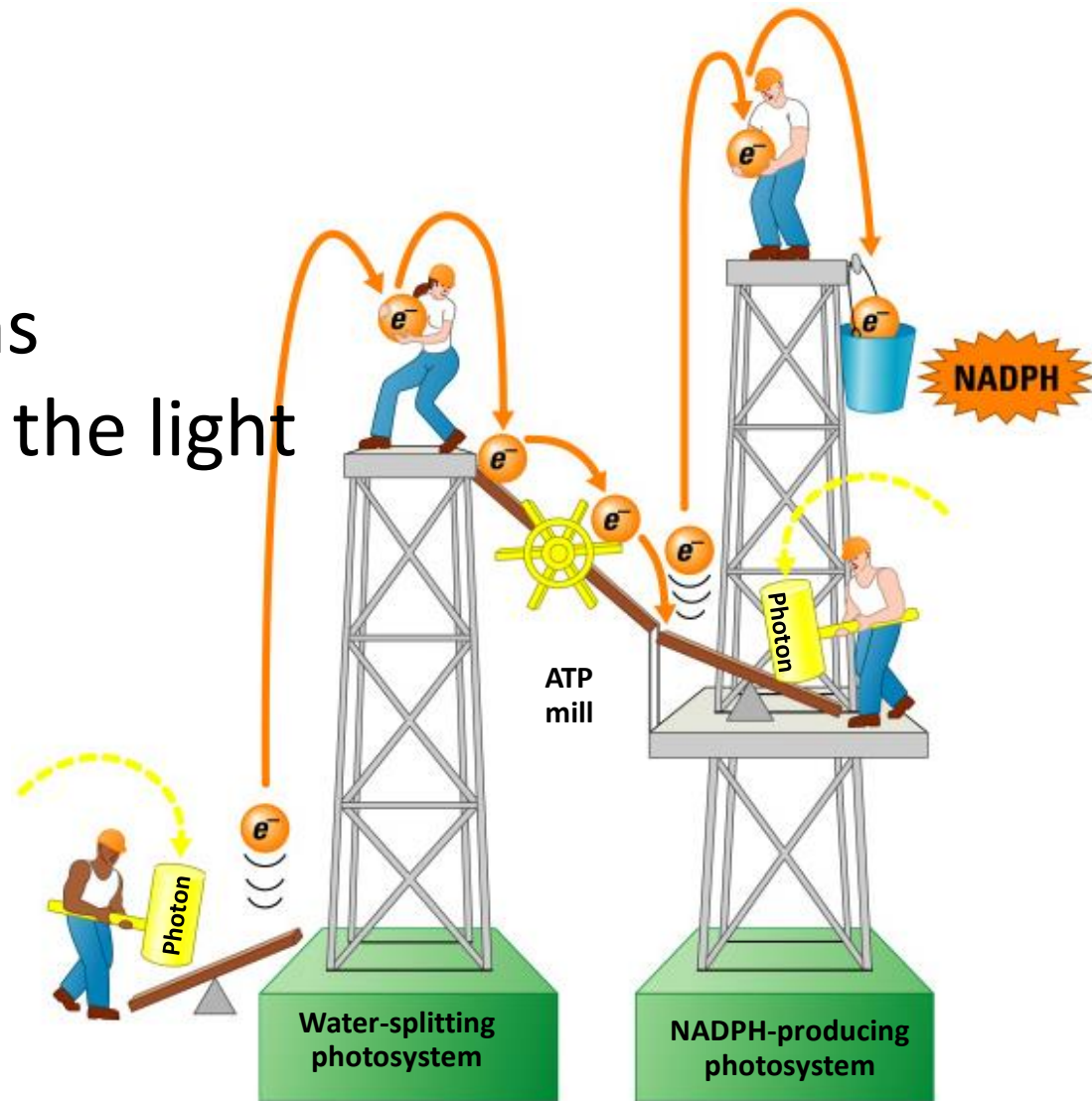
- Photosystem II regains electrons by splitting water, leaving  $O_2$  gas as a by-product

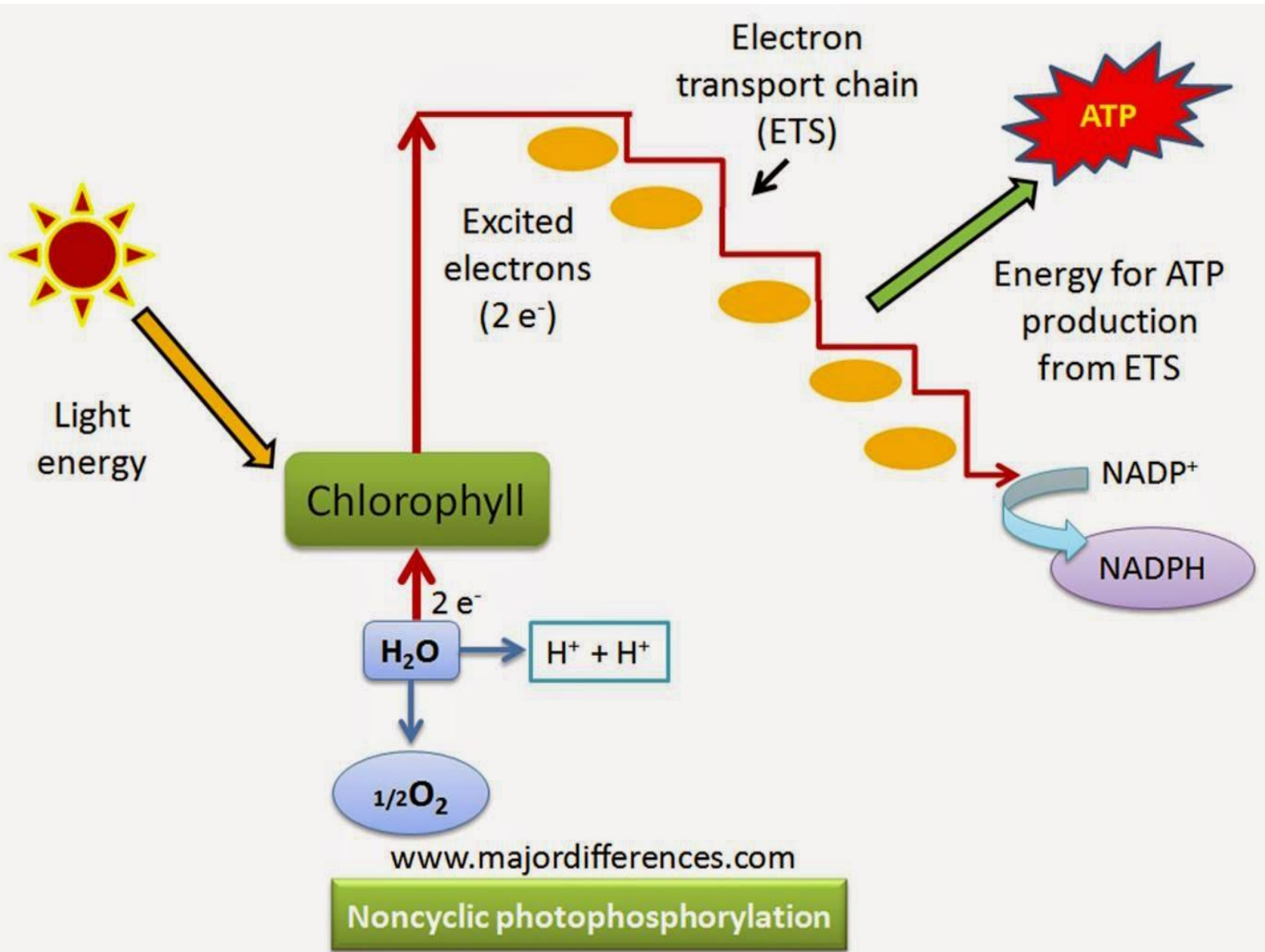


# How the Light Reactions Generate ATP and NADPH

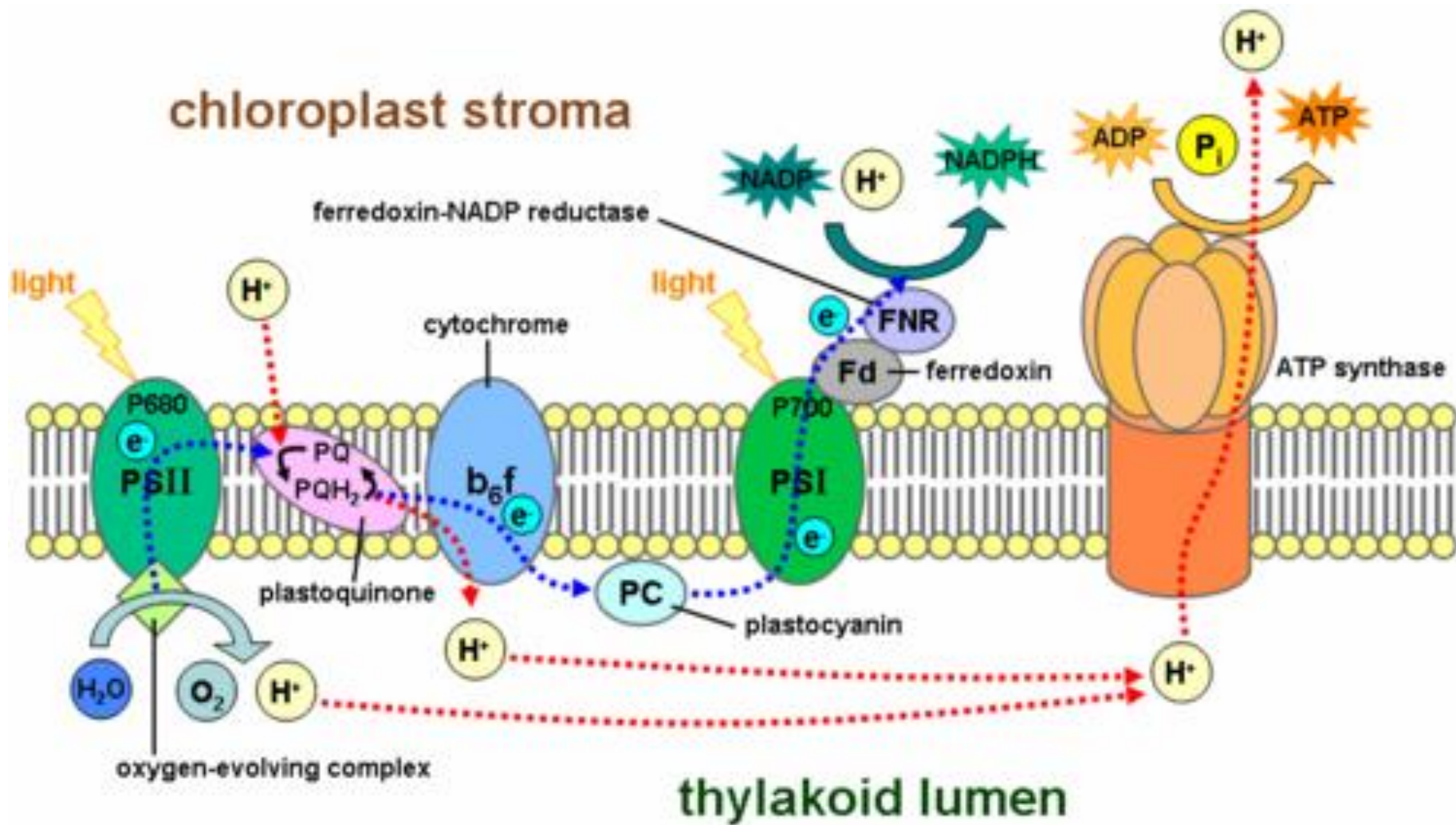


- Two types of photosystems cooperate in the light reactions





# chloroplast stroma

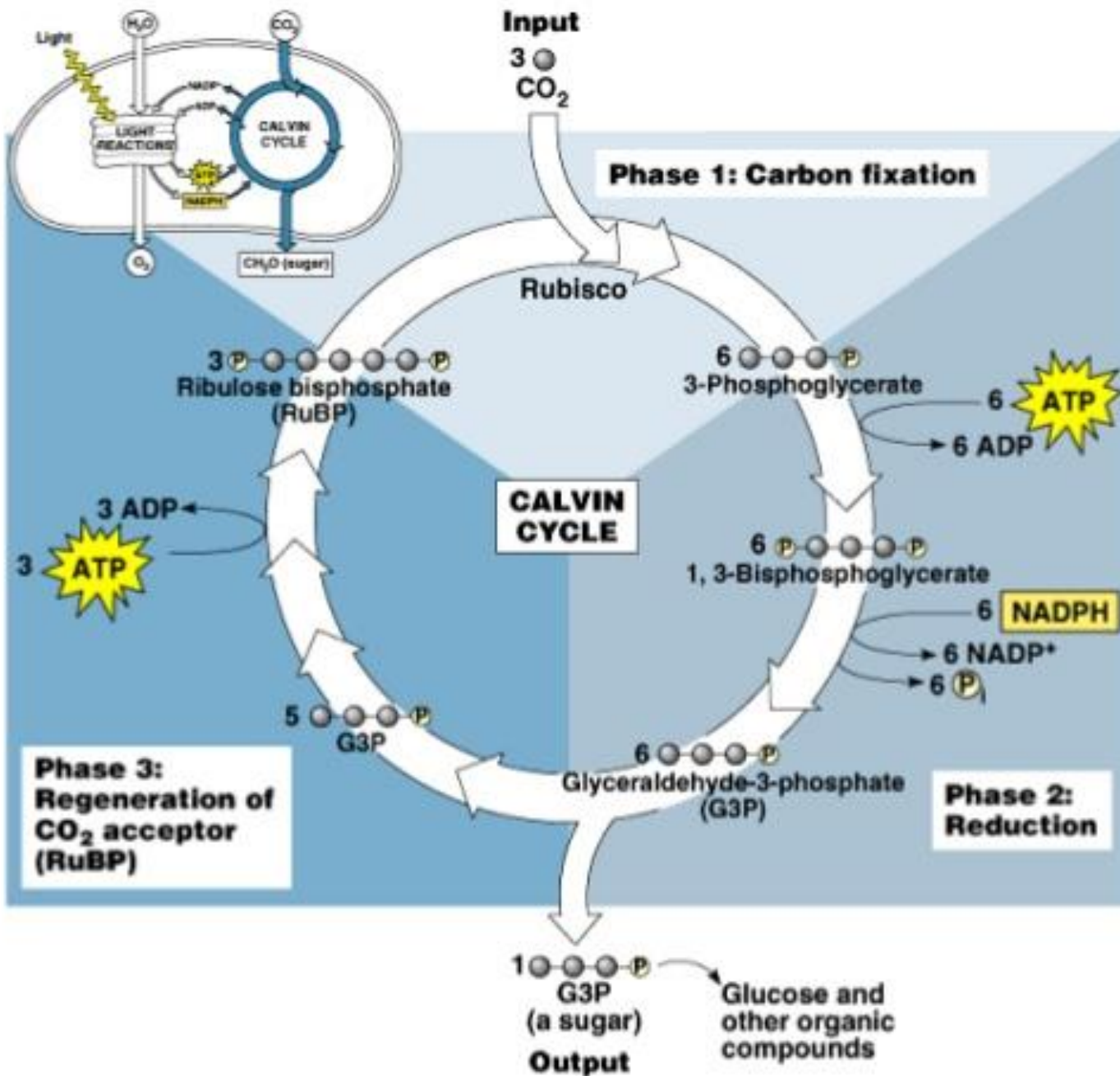


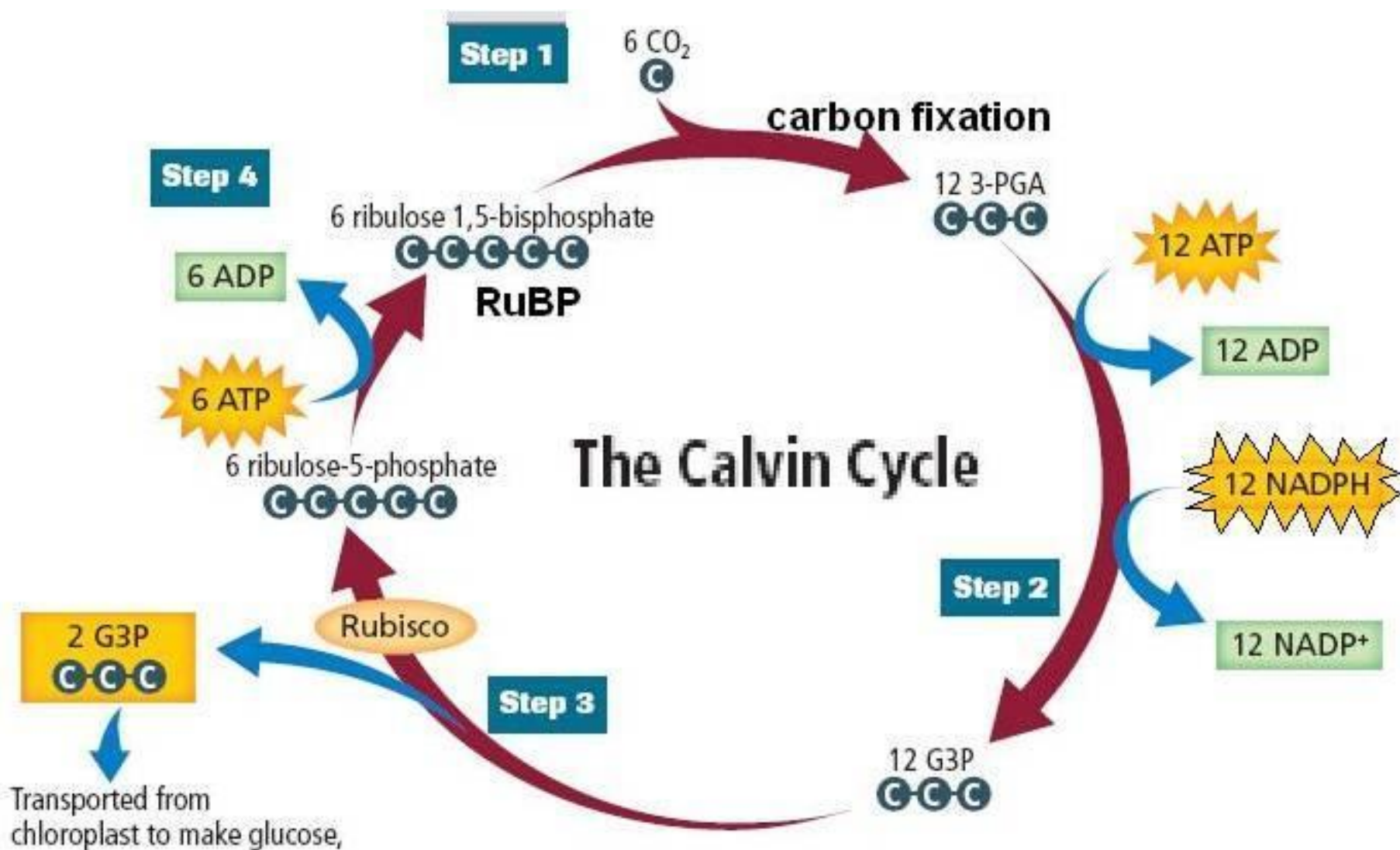
# Plants produce $O_2$ gas by splitting $H_2O$

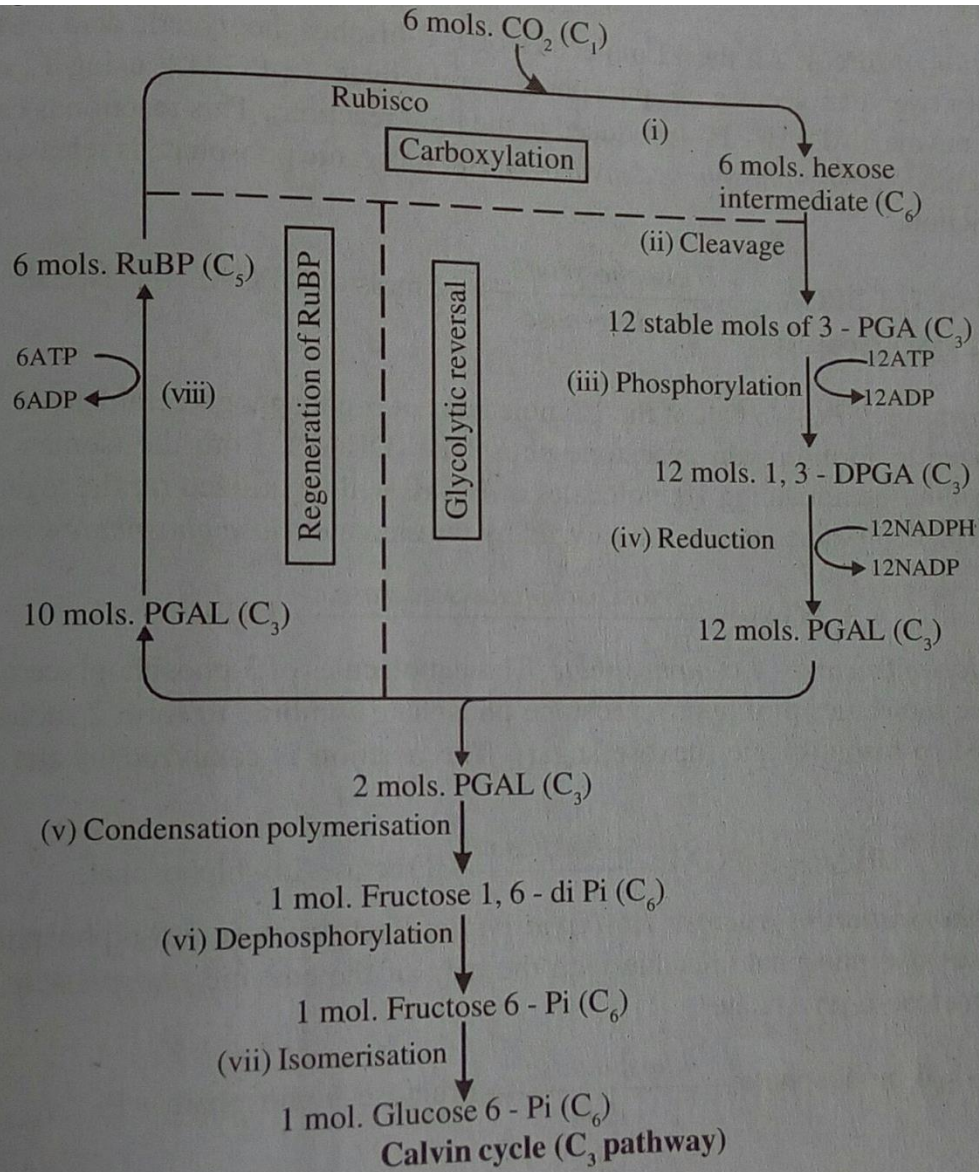
- The  $O_2$  liberated by photosynthesis is made from the oxygen in water ( $H^+$  and  $e^-$ )











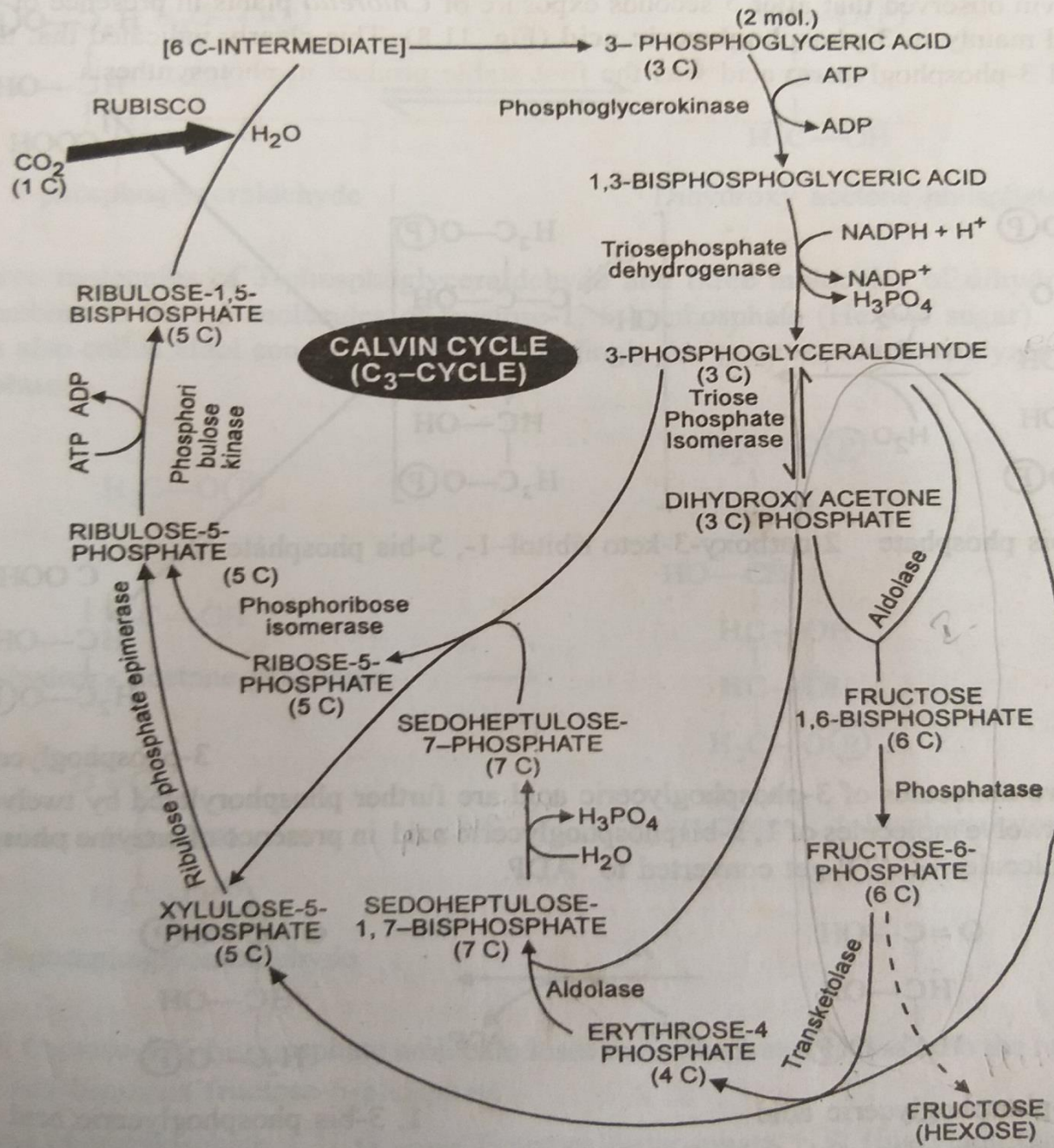


FIGURE 11.9. The Calvin cycle (The C<sub>3</sub> pathway).



- At lower light levels and temperature, C4 plants will utilize the traditional C3 pathway.
- C4 plants occur largely in tropical regions because they grow faster under hot and sunny conditions.

C3 plants live in cooler climates where photorespiration is less of a burden and less ATP is required to fix carbon.

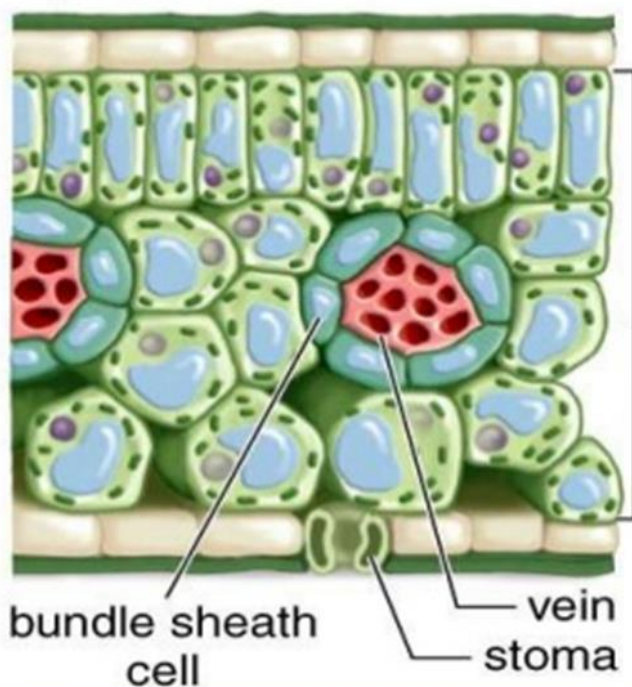


# Chloroplast distribution in $C_4$ vs. $C_3$ Plants

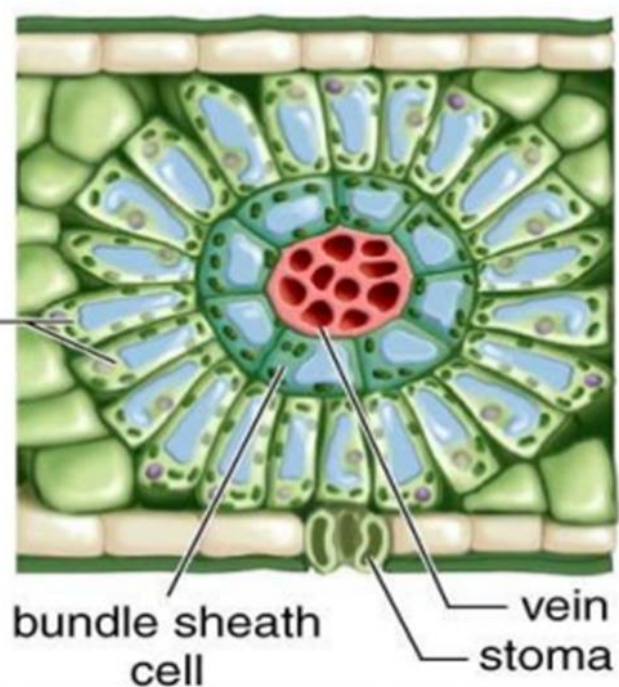
31

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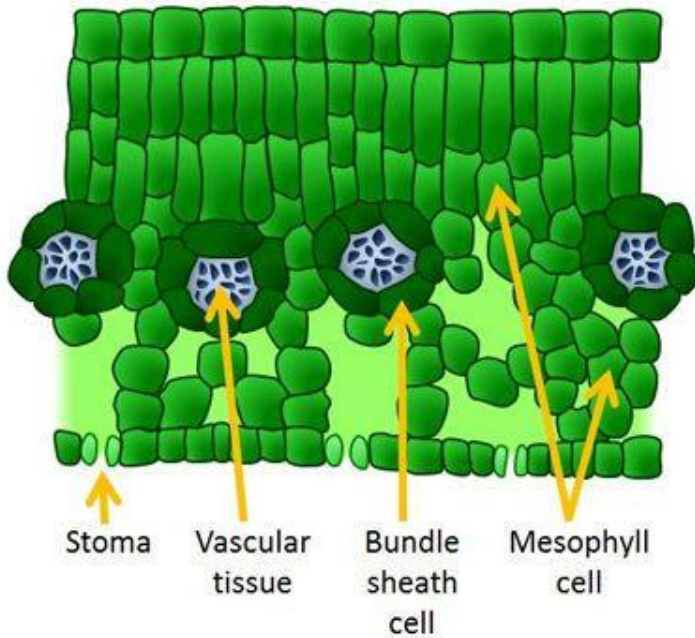
### $C_3$ Plant



### $C_4$ Plant

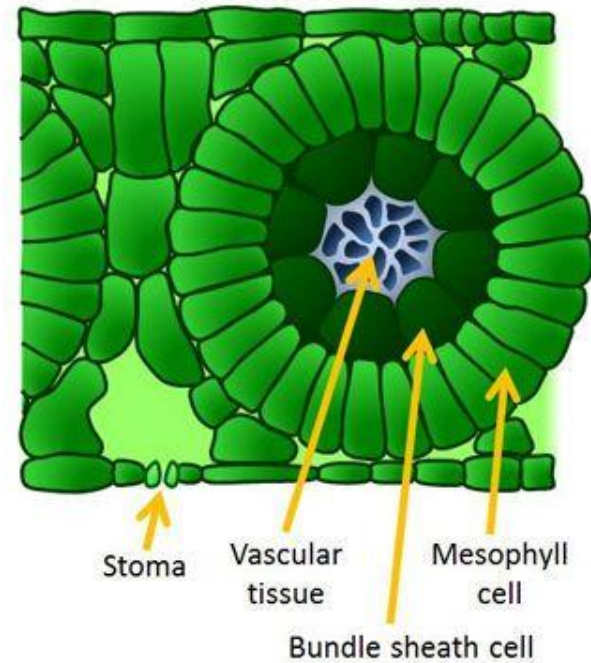


C<sub>3</sub> plant



VS

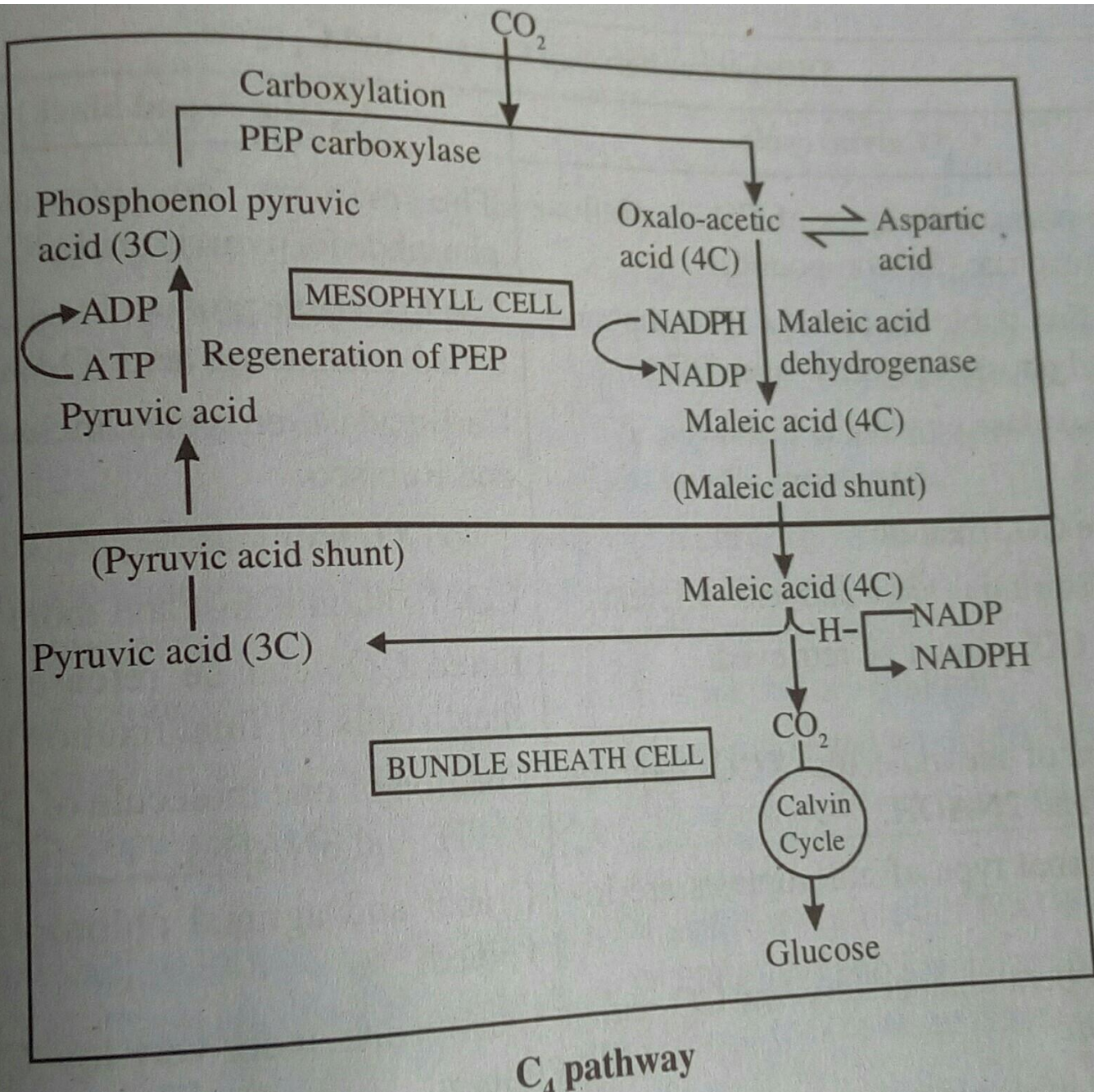
C<sub>4</sub> plant



## C<sub>3</sub> Plants vs. C<sub>4</sub> Plants







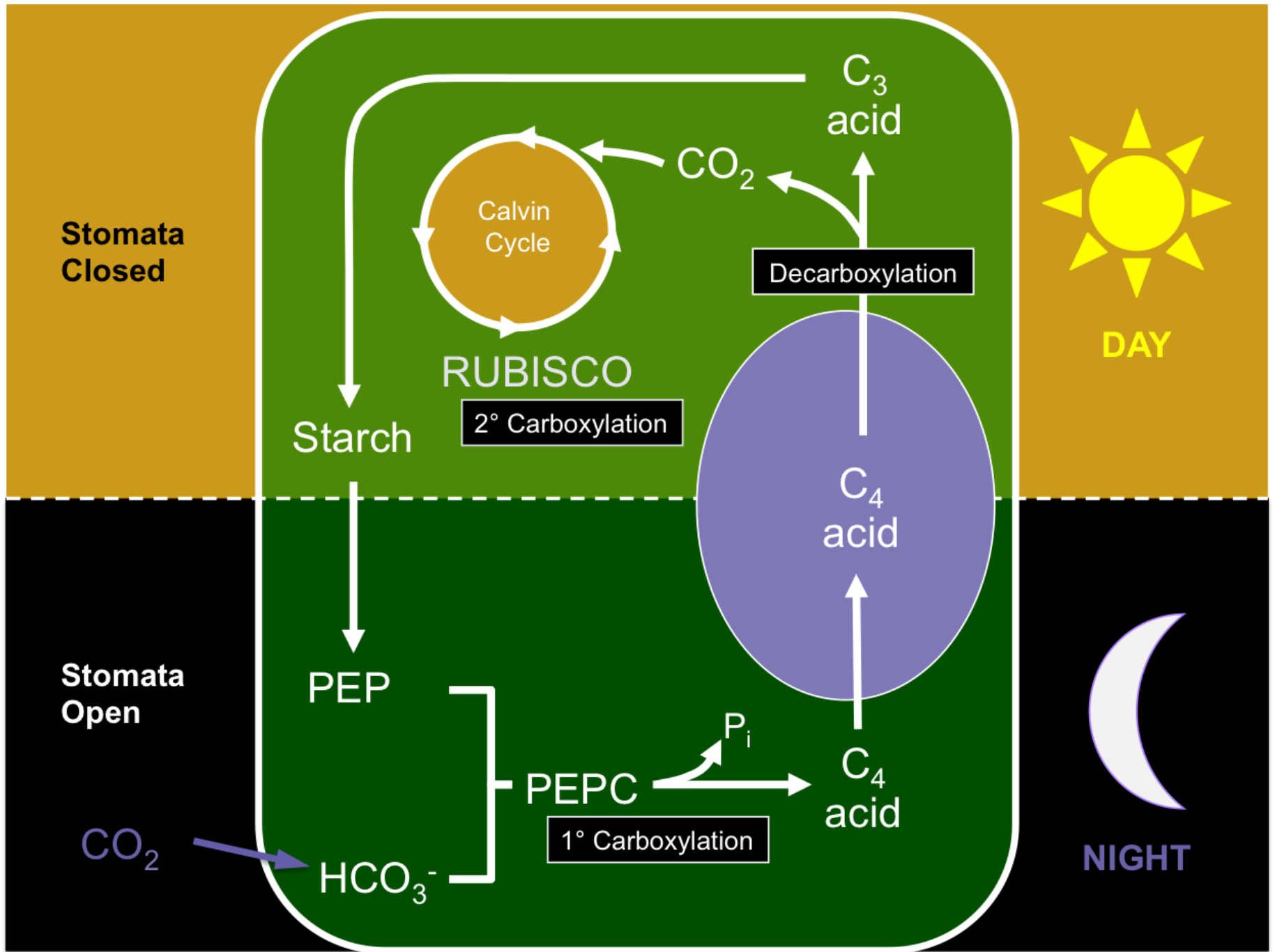
### Differences between $C_3$ cycle and $C_4$ cycle

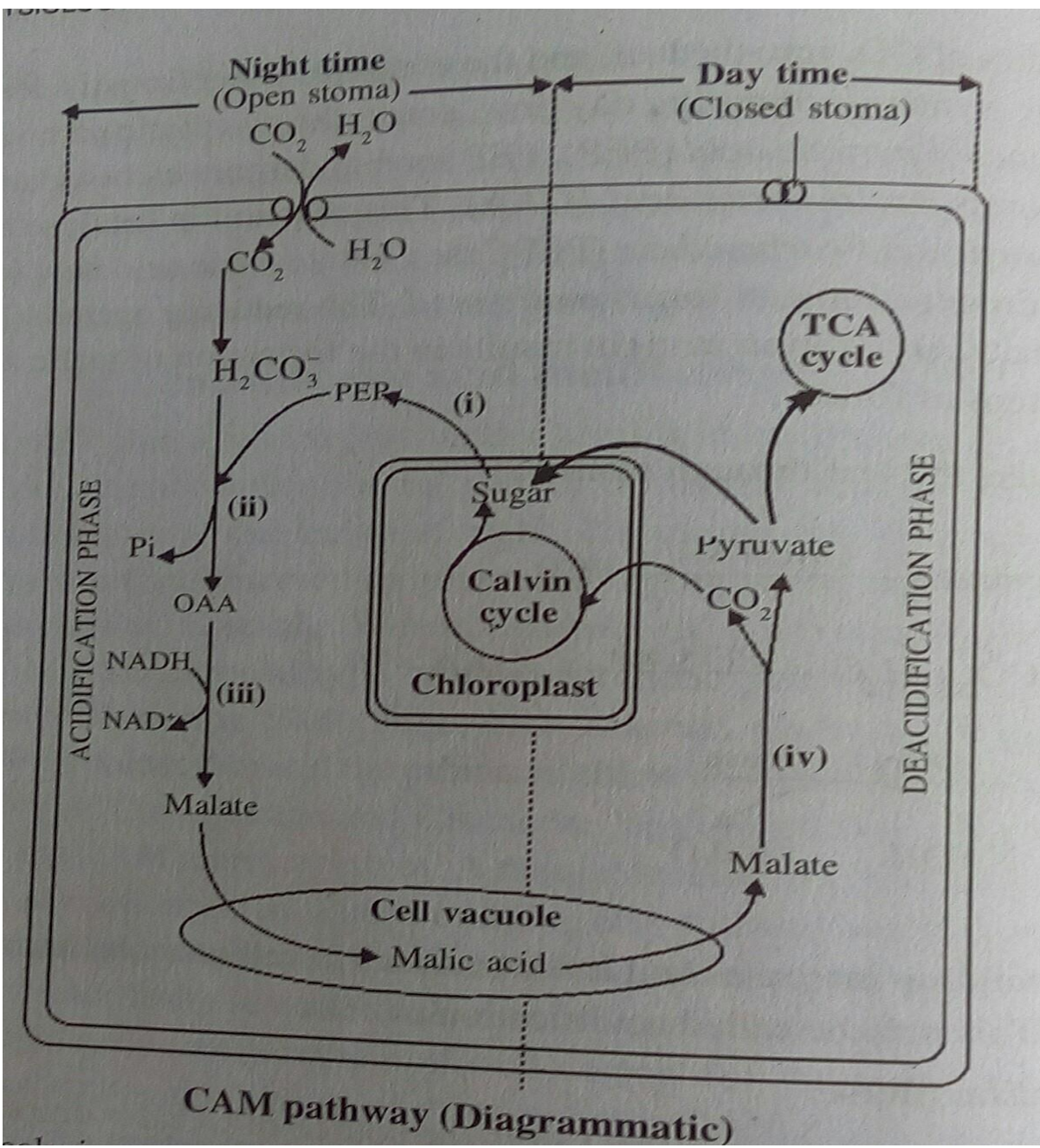
$C_3$ (Calvin) cycle	$C_4$ (Hatch and Slack) cycle
1. The primary acceptor of $CO_2$ is ribulose biphosphate (5C compound).	The primary acceptor of $CO_2$ is phosphoenol pyruvic acid (3C compound).
2. The first stable product is a 3C compound, called phosphoglyceric acid (PGA).	The first stable product is a 4C compound, called oxaloacetic acid (OAA).
3. Carboxylase enzyme is Rubisco.	Carboxylase enzymes include PEPCase and Rubisco.
4. Single $CO_2$ fixation.	Two $CO_2$ fixations.
5. $CO_2$ fixation is slow and less efficient.	$CO_2$ fixation is fast and more efficient
6. Fixed $CO_2$ cannot be retrieved	Fixed $CO_2$ can be released to bundle sheath cells for final fixation by $C_3$ cycle.
7. Fixation of one molecule of $CO_2$ requires 3 ATP and 2NADH.	Fixation of one molecule of $CO_2$ requires 5 ATP and 3NADH.
8. Only granal type of chloroplasts are involved.	Granal and agranal chloroplasts are involved.
9. Cannot operate under very low $CO_2$ concentration.	Can operate under very low $CO_2$ concentration.
10. Operates in all plants.	Operates only in $C_4$ plants.

### Differences between $C_3$ plants and $C_4$ plants

$C_3$ plants	$C_4$ plants
(i) Include most crop plants, cereals, tobacco, beans, etc.	Include maize, millets, sorghum, sugarcane, etc.
(ii) Only $C_3$ pathway is present.	Both $C_3$ and $C_4$ pathways present.
(iii) Do not possess Kranz anatomy.	Possess Kranz anatomy.
(iv) Chloroplasts are monomorphic and granal.	Chloroplasts are dimorphic, with granal and agranal types.
(v) Photosystems I & II present.	PSII is absent in Kranz type chloroplasts.
(vi) Primary $CO_2$ acceptor is RuBP.	Primary $CO_2$ acceptor is PEP.
(vii) $CO_2$ fixing enzyme is RuBP carboxylase.	$CO_2$ fixing enzyme is PEP carboxylase.
(viii) Carboxylase has moderate affinity to $CO_2$ .	Carboxylase has high affinity to $CO_2$ .
(ix) The first stable product of photosynthesis is the 3-carbon PGAL.	The first stable product of photosynthesis is the 4-carbon oxaloacetic acid.
(x) Photosynthetic cells include only mesophyll cells.	Photosynthetic cells include mesophyll cells and bundle sheath cells.
(xi) Optimum temperature for photosynthesis is lower. So, photosynthetic rate is lesser at warmer temperature.	Optimum temperature for photosynthesis is higher. So, photosynthetic rate is higher at warmer temperature.
(xii) Maximal photorespiration.	Minimal photorespiration.
(xiii) Transpiration and water loss greater.	Transpiration and water loss lesser.
(xiv) Can hardly cope with higher temperature.	Can easily cope with higher temperature.







CAM pathway (Diagrammatic)

# C<sub>4</sub> & CAM Plants Introduction

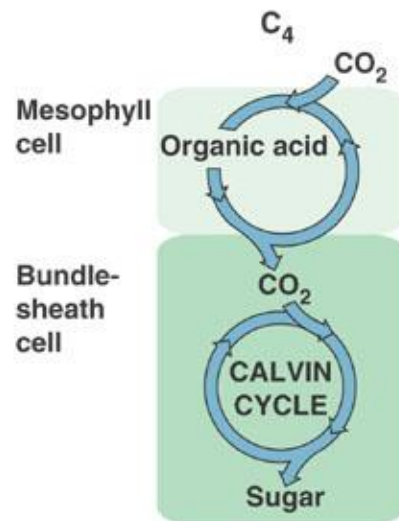
C<sub>4</sub> and CAM plants have devised mechanisms that prevent/reduce the impact of photorespiration.



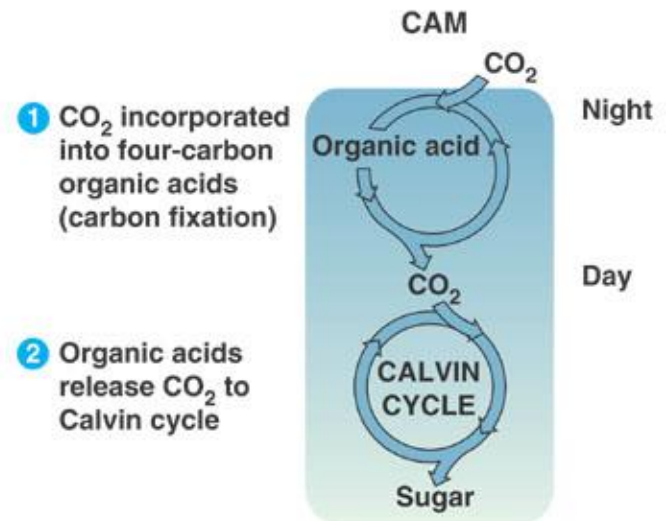
Sugarcane



Pineapple



(a) Spatial separation of steps



(b) Temporal separation of steps

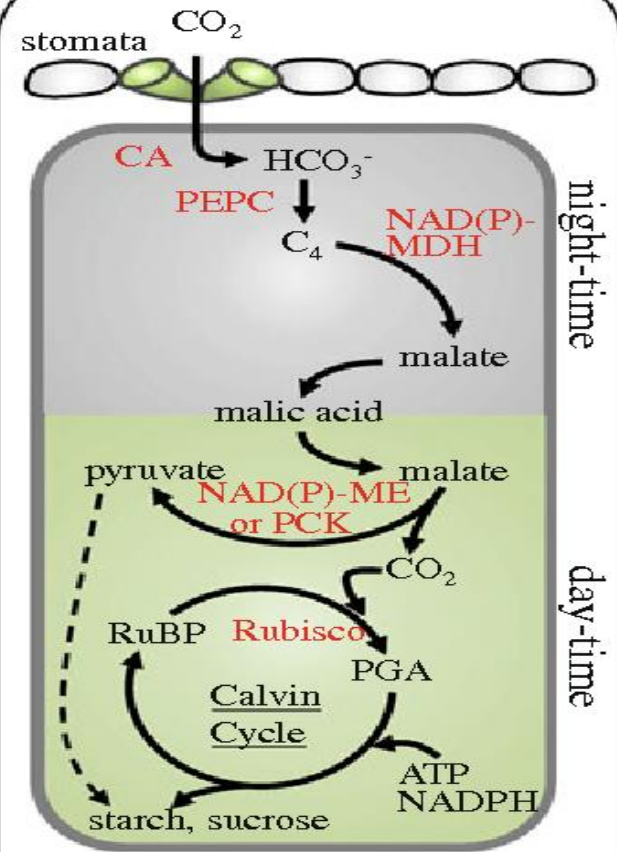
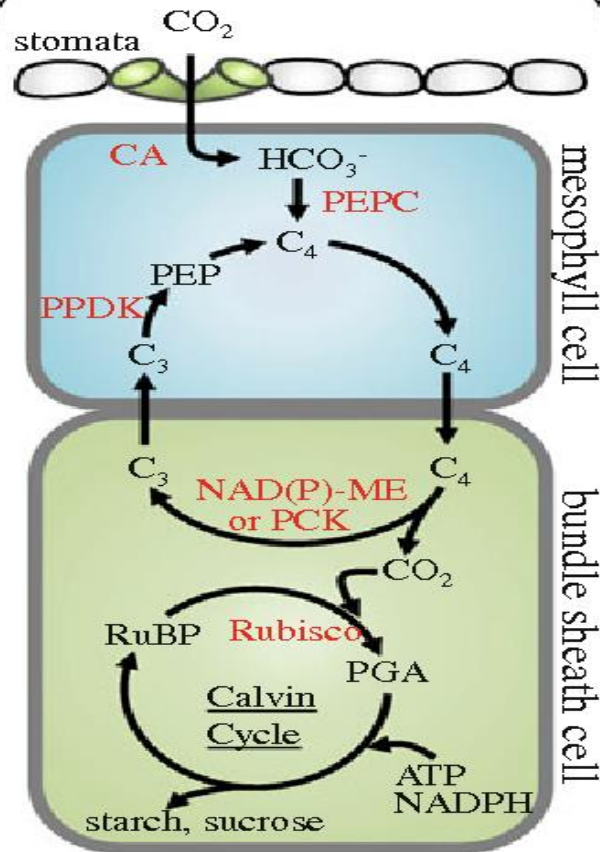
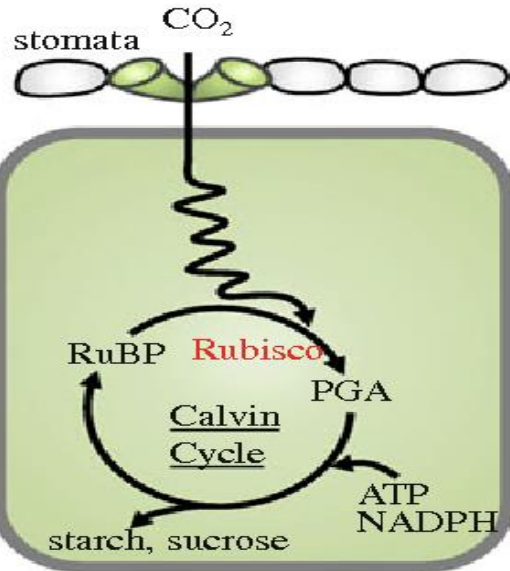
1 CO<sub>2</sub> incorporated into four-carbon organic acids (carbon fixation)

2 Organic acids release CO<sub>2</sub> to Calvin cycle

### C<sub>3</sub> photosynthesis

### C<sub>4</sub> photosynthesis

### CAM photosynthesis





# PHOTORESPIRATION

In a very lengthy and costly process,  $O_2$  is converted into  $CO_2$  & 3-PGAL

Photorespiration involves the use of three organelles

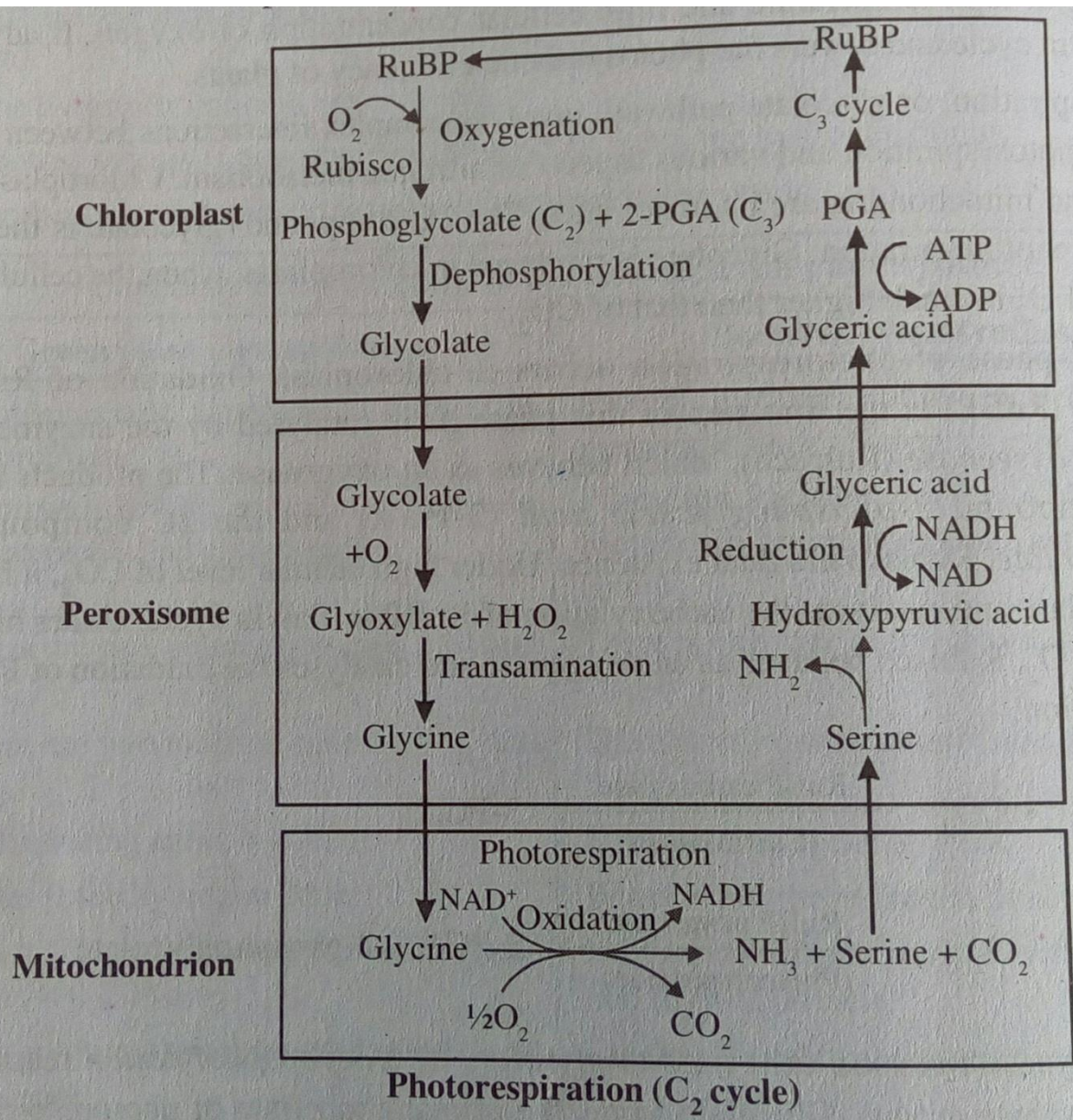
- Chloroplast
- Peroxisome
- Mitochondria

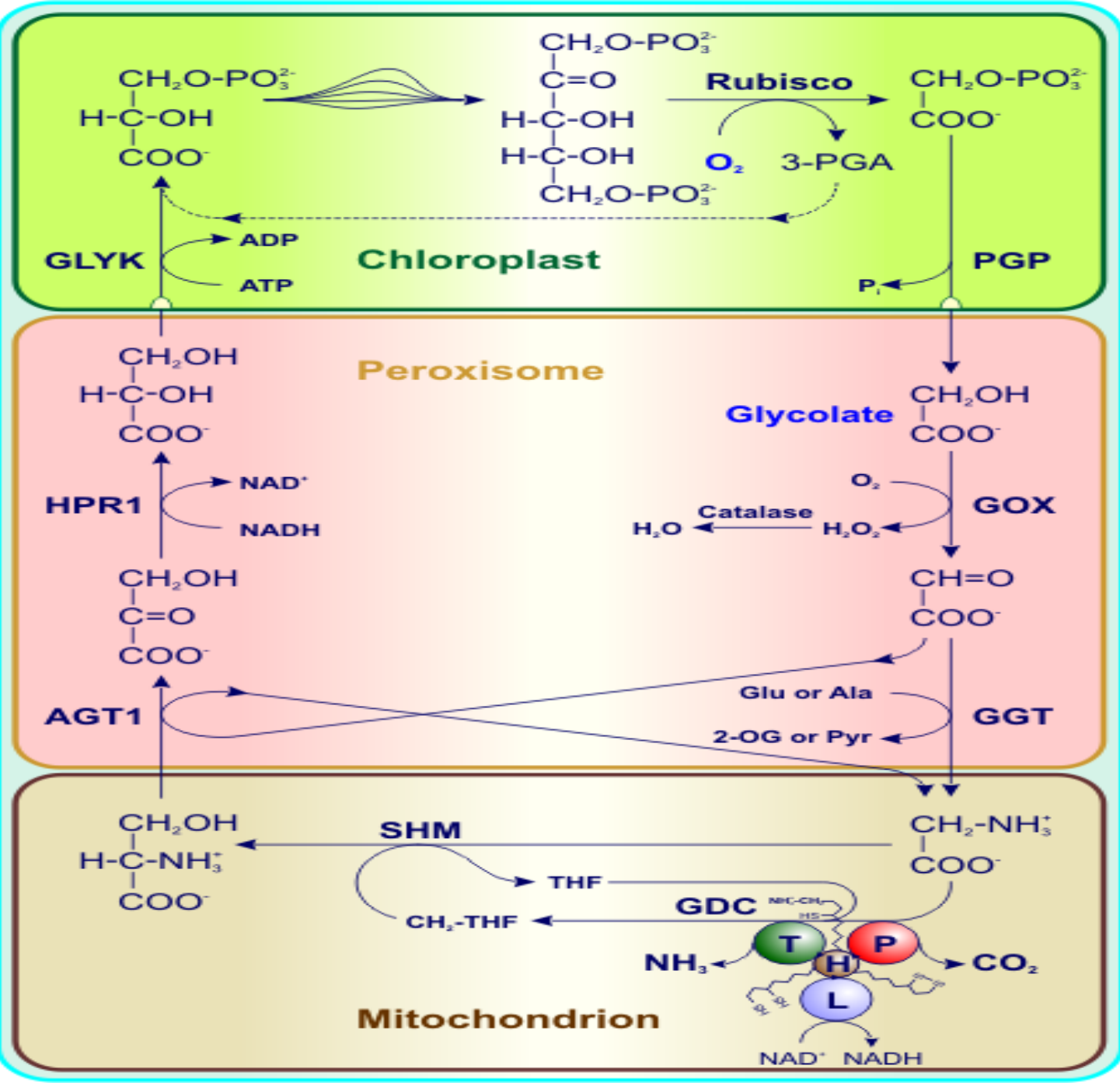
Photorespiration also requires the use of ATP and NADPH.

- Reducing the number of those molecules readily available for the Calvin cycle

- On dry, hot days in the presence of light  $C_3$  plants close their stomata.
- This causes the plant to use  $O_2$  retain as much  $H_2O$ .  
 $O_2$  binds to RUBISCO and starts the series of reactions.

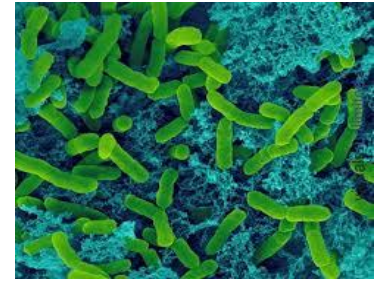
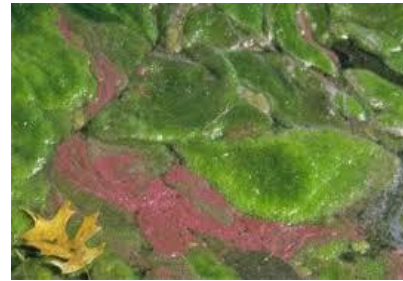
$H_2O$  is retained for use in the light reactions to fill the ATP and NADPH used as a result of photorespiration.





# Bacterial photosynthesis

- **Green sulphur bacteria**  $H_2S$   
(Chlorobium, Chlorobacterium)



- **Purple sulphur bacteria** **thiosulphate**  
(Chromatium)

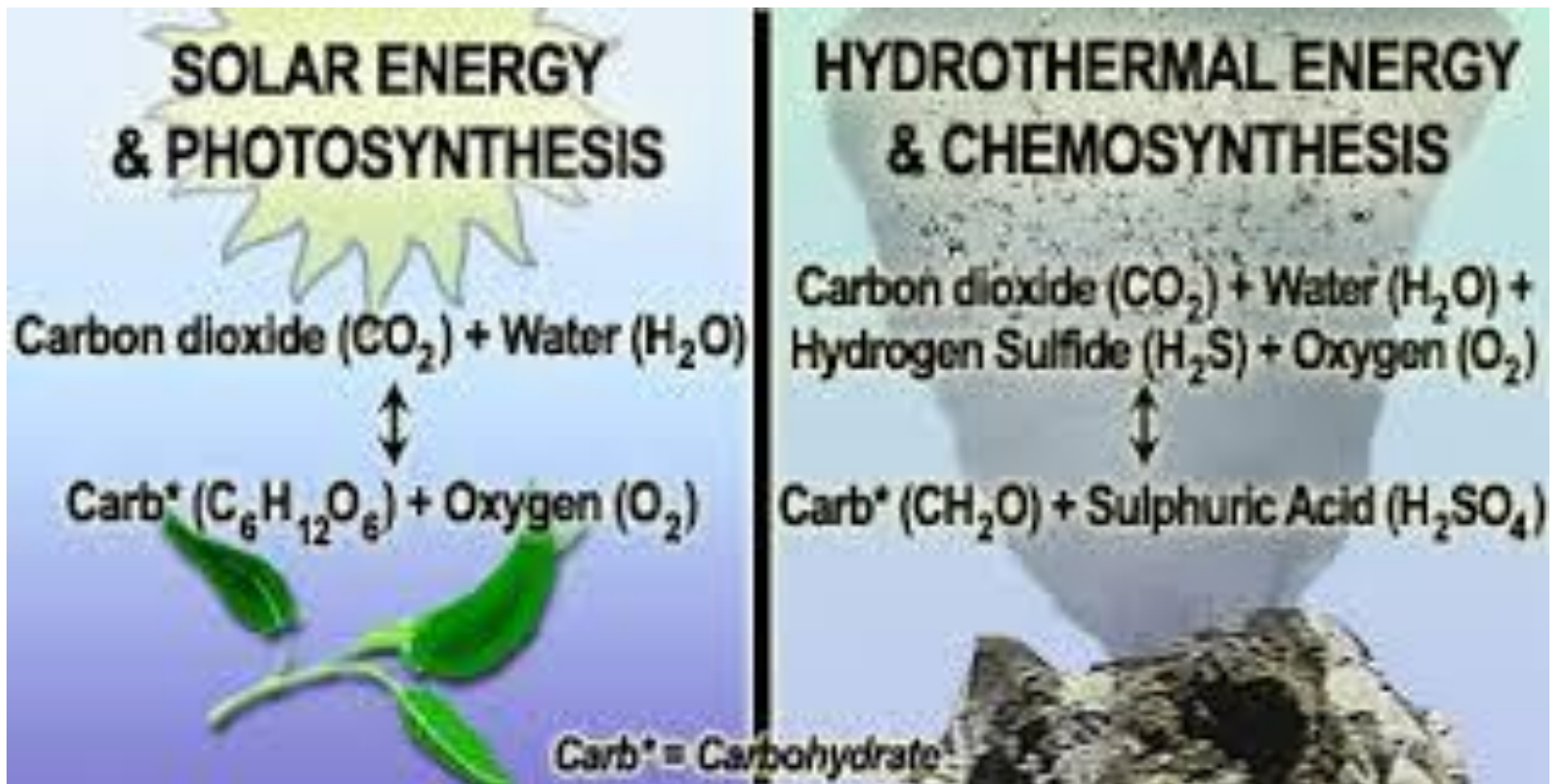


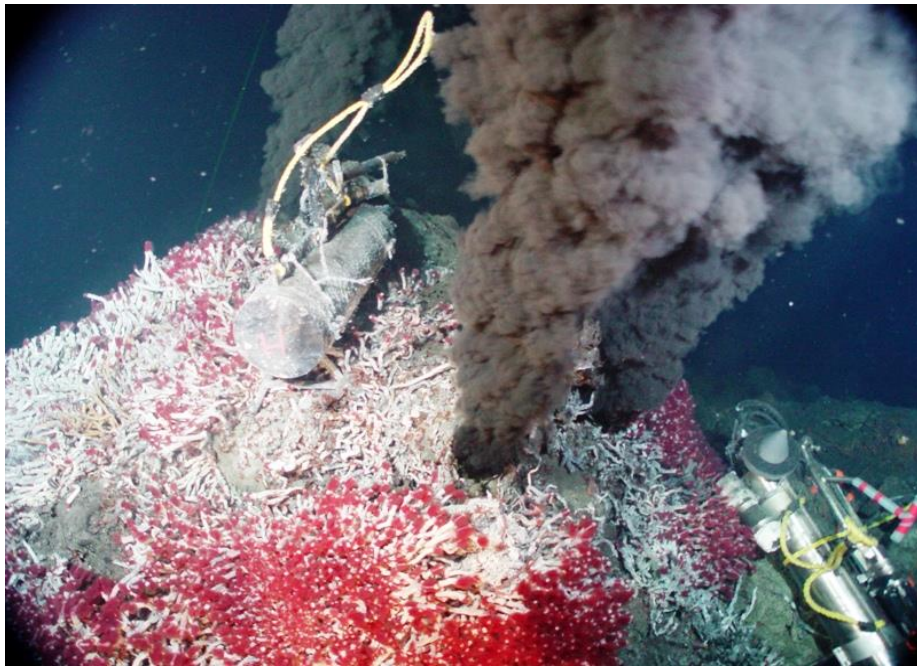
- **Non sulphur bacteria** **Malate, succinate, alcohol**  
(Rhodospirillum)



- Pigments (Green bacteriochlorophyll, Reddish purple bacterial chlorophyll)
- **Not oxygenic**, hydrogen donor **not water**
- Only **one** pigment system, **one** photosystem, **one** reaction centre (p840/870), **one** photochemical reaction, **two** light harvesting complexes.
- Chloroplast absent, pigments located on **plasma membrane**
- Reducing agent **NAD<sup>+</sup>**
- Wavelength **870 to 1020nm**
- Both **cyclic and non cyclic** photophosphorylation occur
-

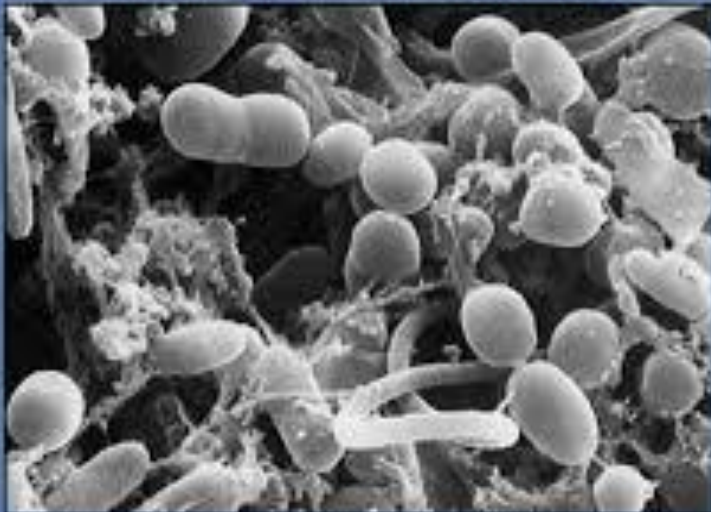
# Chemosynthesis





## Chemosynthetic Bacteria (commonly found in hydrothermal vents)

Micrograph courtesy of the University of California, San Diego, J. R. McCallum, et al., 2003, Nature, 421, 613-616



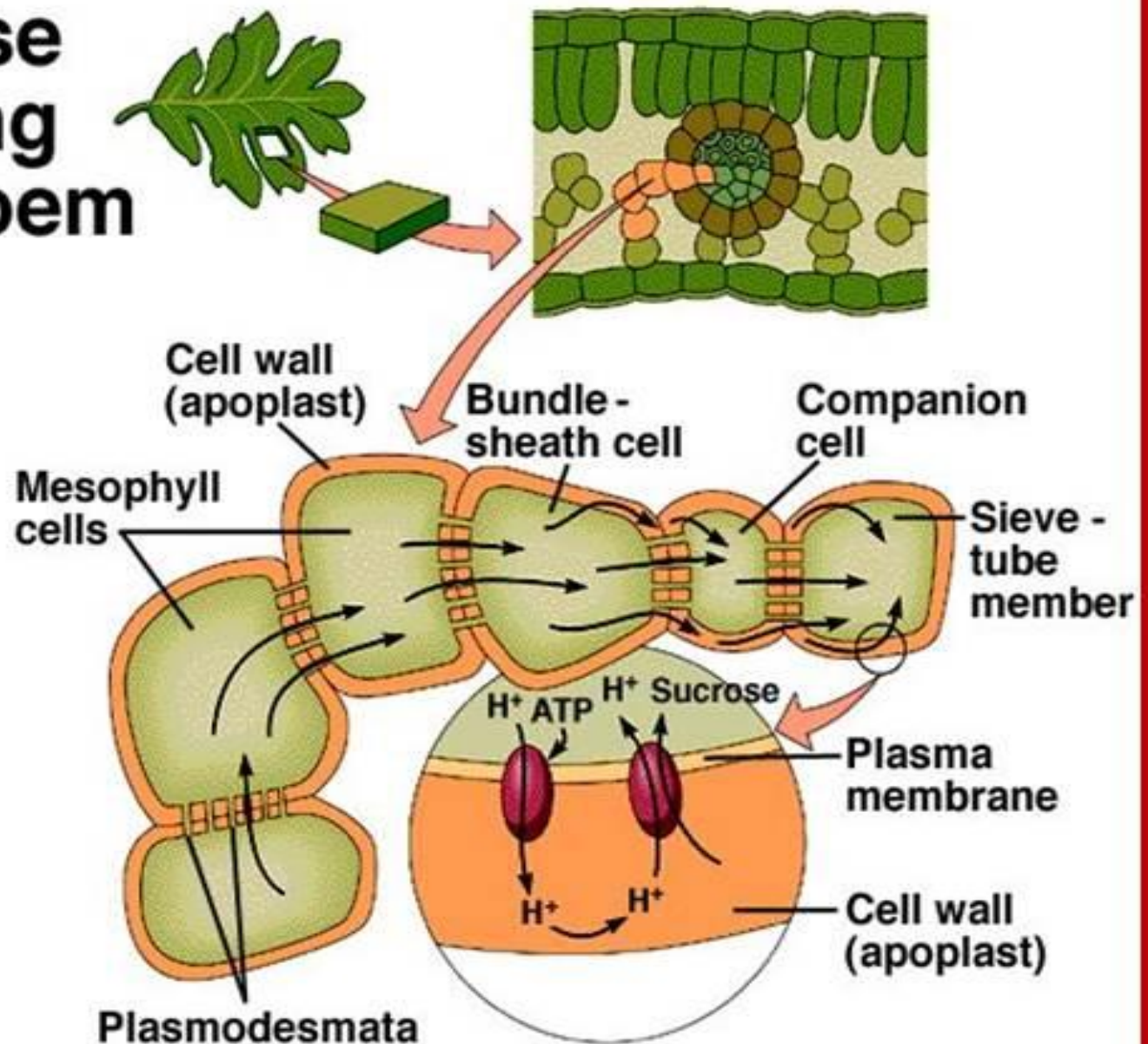
## Chemosynthetic bacteria

Chemosynthetic bacteria are producers that **get their energy from chemical substances** and not from light.

There are chemosynthetic bacteria inside giant tube worms.



# Sucrose Loading into Phloem





# Translocation

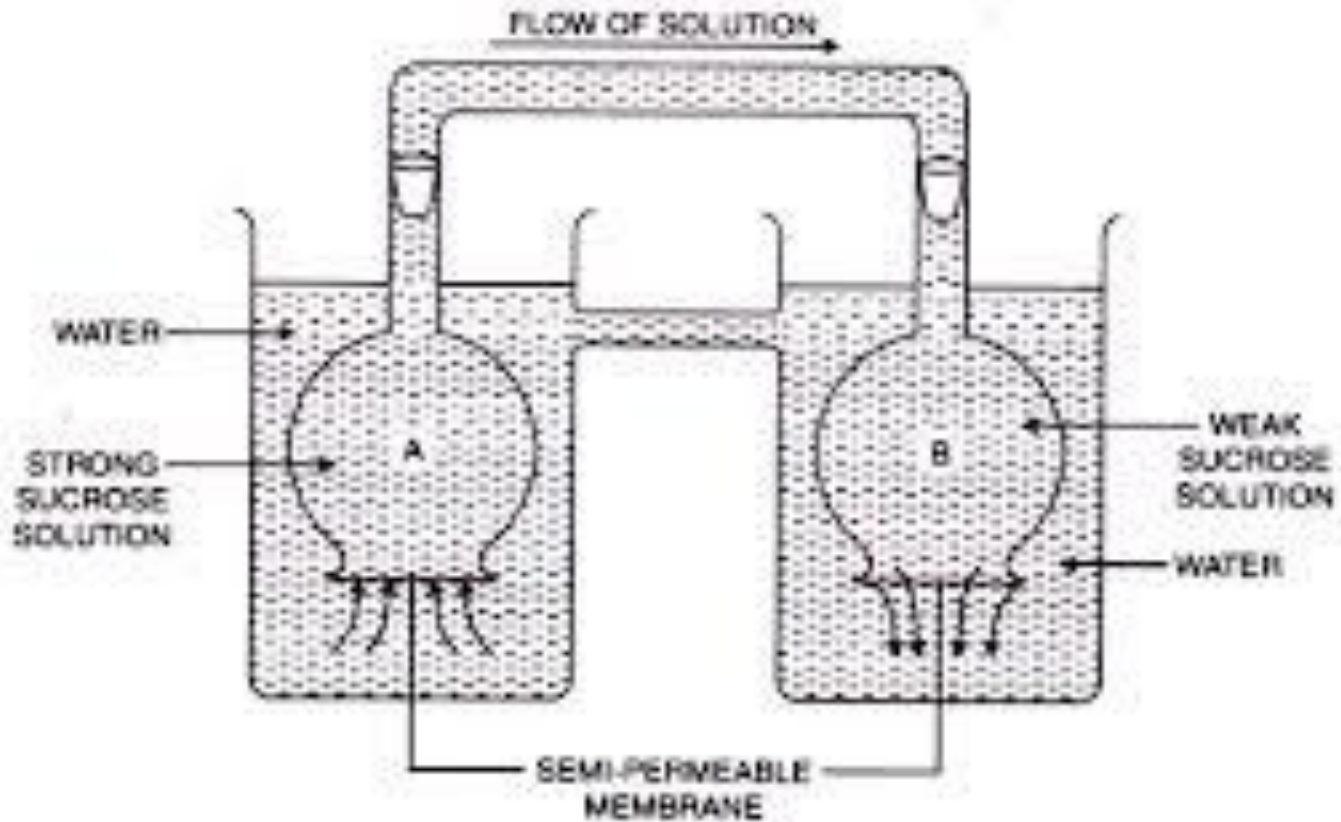
- **Short distance translocation**

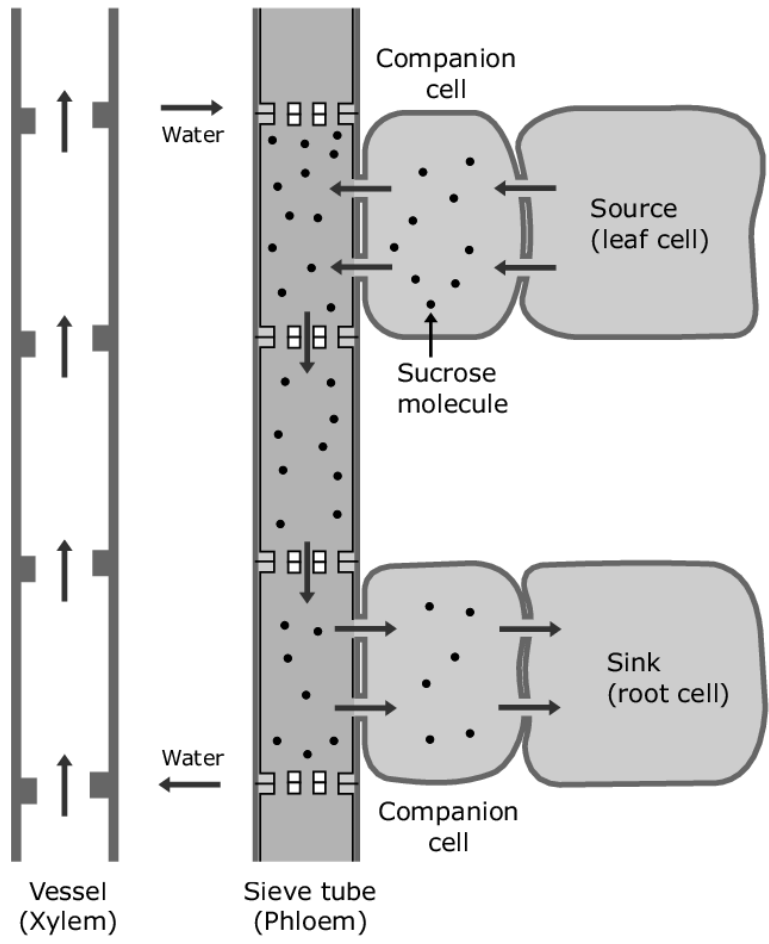
- Protoplasmic streaming theory
- Contractile protein hypothesis
- Diffusion hypothesis
- Activated diffusion theory

- **Long distance translocation**

- Munch hypothesis / Mass flow hypothesis/ Pressure flow hypothesis

# Munch hypothesis





- Phloem transports food molecules made by photosynthesis by a pressure-flow mechanism
  - Sugar is loaded into a phloem tube at the sugar source, raising the solute concentration inside the tube

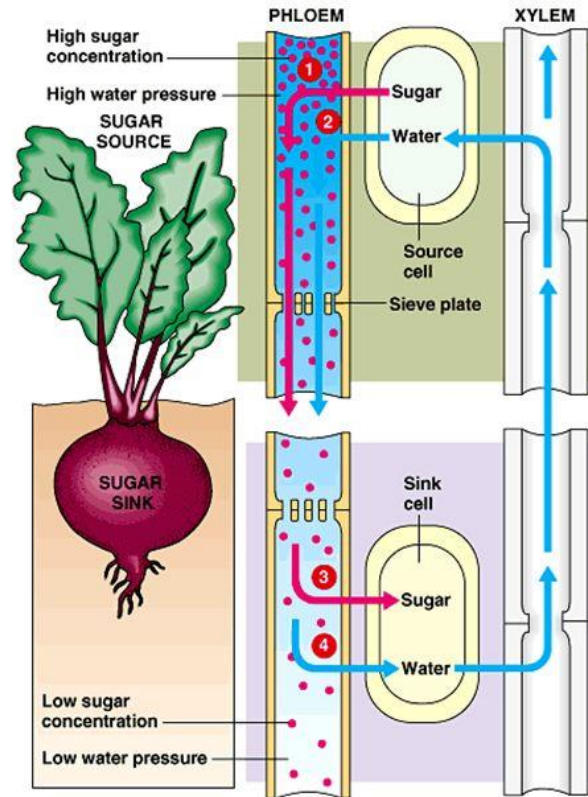
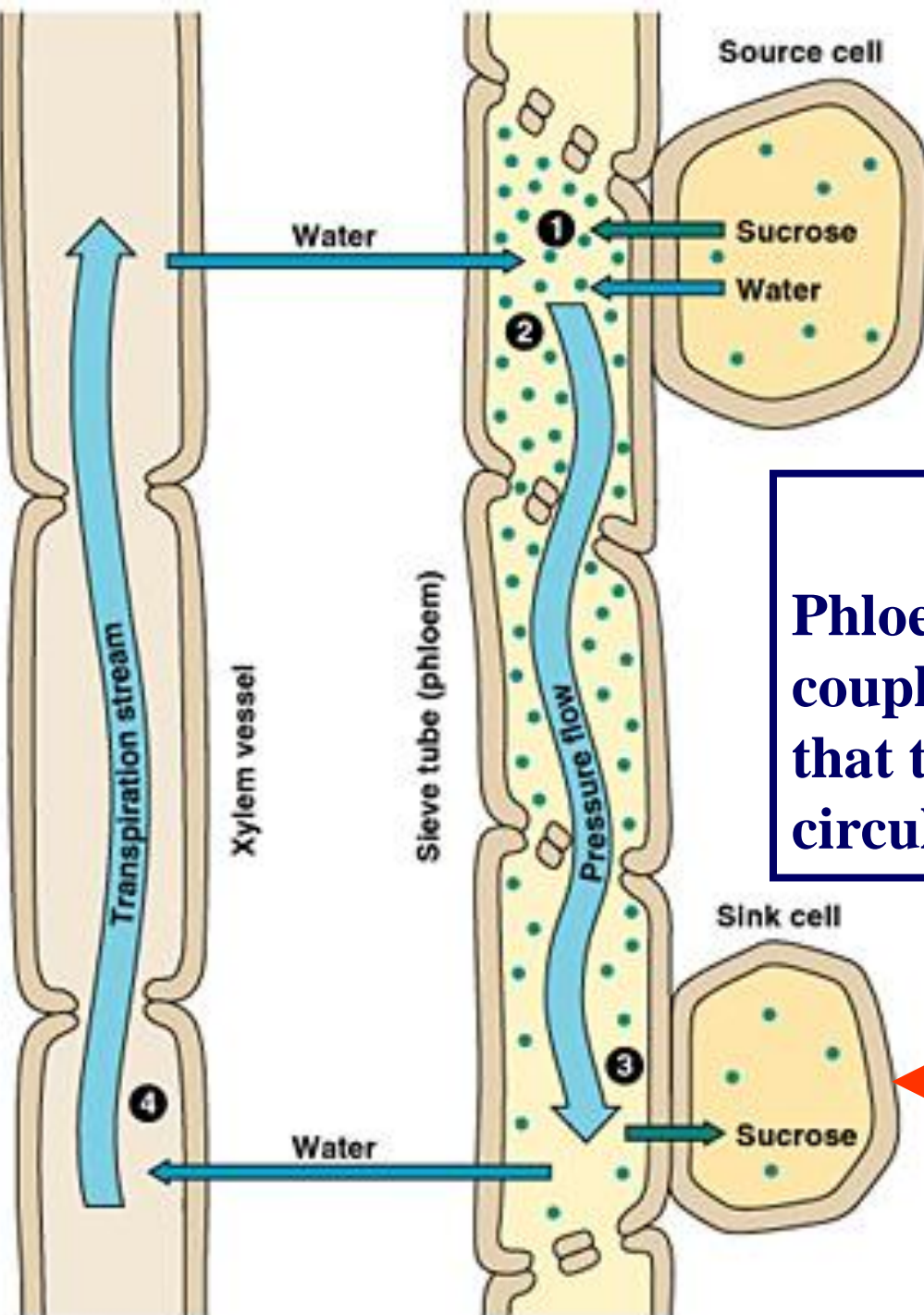


Figure 32.5B

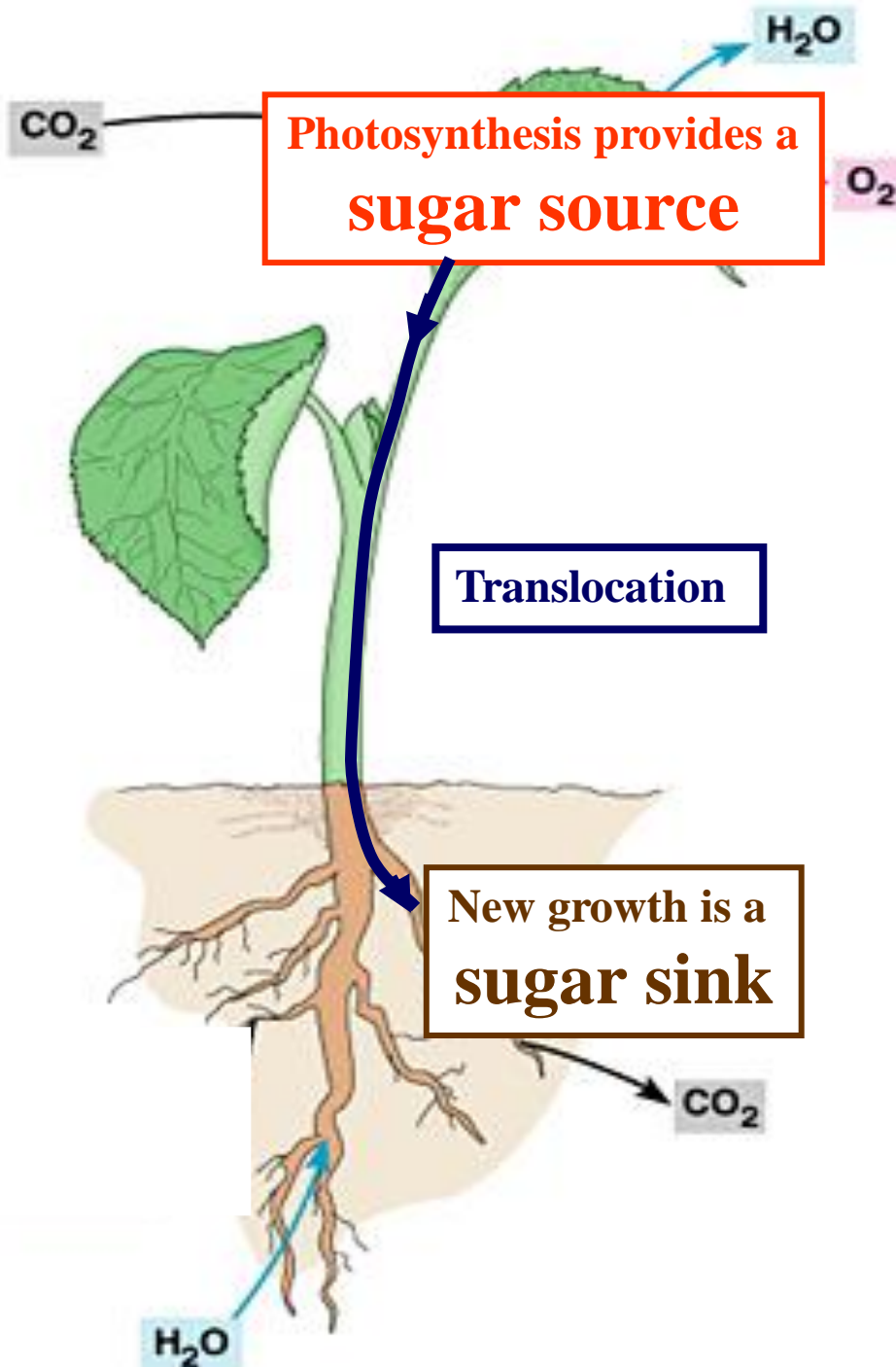


Physiological process of loading sucrose into the phloem

***Pressure-flow***  
Phloem and xylem are coupled in an osmotic system that transports sucrose and circulates water.

Physiological process of unloading sucrose from the phloem into the sink

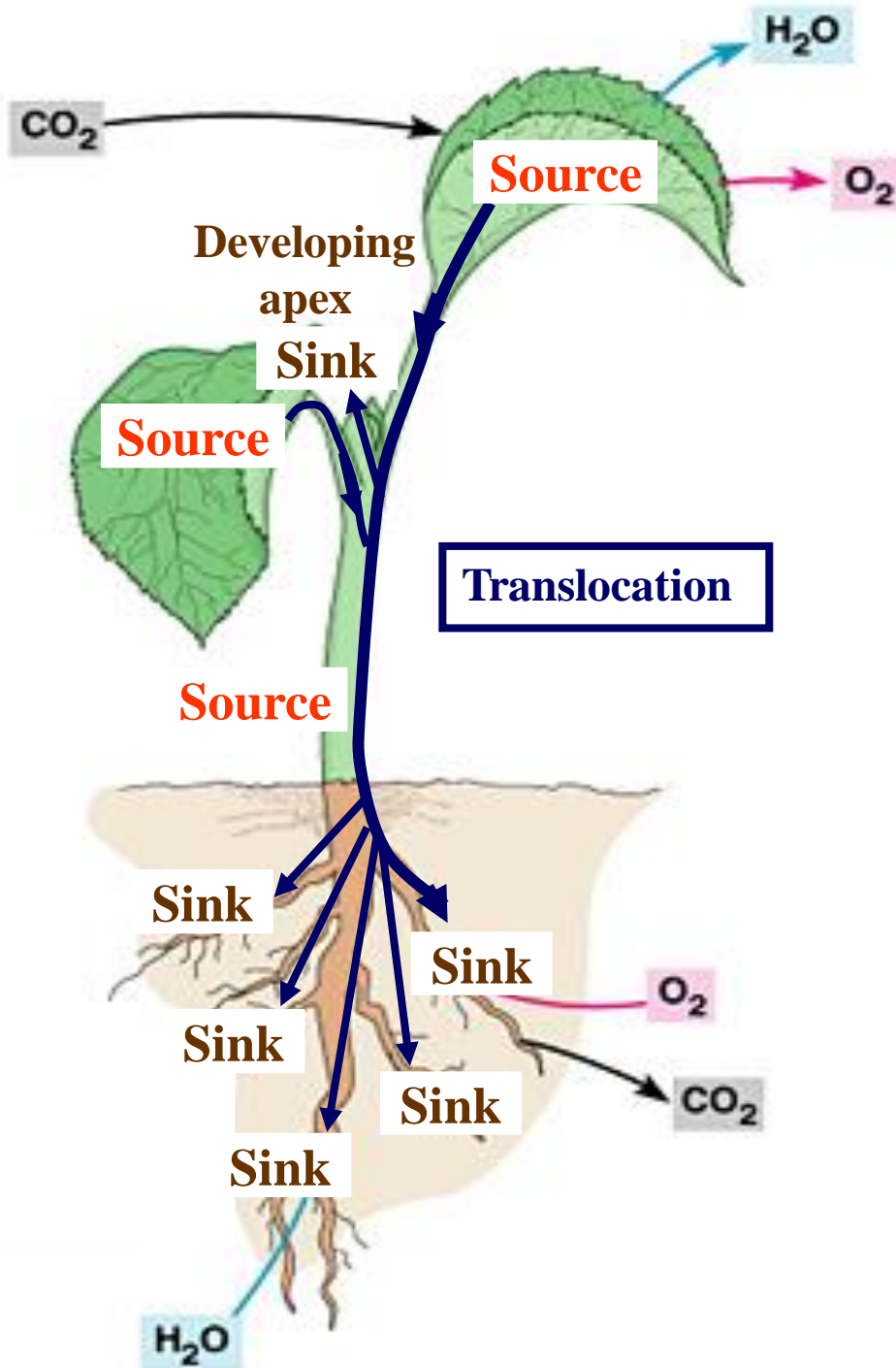
# Sources and sinks



Direction of transport through phloem is determined by relative locations of areas of supply, sources and areas where utilization of photosynthate takes place, sinks.

**Source:** any transporting organ capable of mobilizing organic compounds or producing photosynthate in excess of its own needs, e.g., mature leaf, storage organ during exporting phase of development.

**Sink:** non photosynthetic organs and organs that do not produce enough photoassimilate to meet their own requirements, e.g., roots, tubers, developing fruits, immature leaves.



The flow of water in plants is almost always from roots to leaves.

**Translocation of sucrose can be in any direction - depending on source and sink location and strength.**

Examples:

*Beta maritima* (wild beet) root is a sink during the first growing season.

In the second season the root becomes a source, sugars are mobilized and used to produce a new shoot.

In contrast, in cultivated sugar beets roots are sinks during all phases of development.

# What is transported in phloem?

**TABLE 10.2**

The composition of phloem sap from castor bean (*Ricinus communis*), collected as an exudate from cuts in the phloem

Component	Concentration (mg mL <sup>-1</sup> )
Sugars	80.0–106.0
Amino acids	5.2
Organic acids	2.0–3.2
Protein	1.45–2.20
Potassium	2.3–4.4
Chloride	0.355–0.675
Phosphate	0.350–0.550
Magnesium	0.109–0.122

Source: Hall and Baker 1972.



## Sugars that are not generally in phloem

- Carbohydrates transported in phloem are all *nonreducing* sugars.
  - *This is because they are less reactive*
- Reducing sugars, such as *Glucose*, *Mannose* and *Fructose* contain an exposed aldehyde or ketone group
  - *Too chemically reactive to be transported in the phloem*

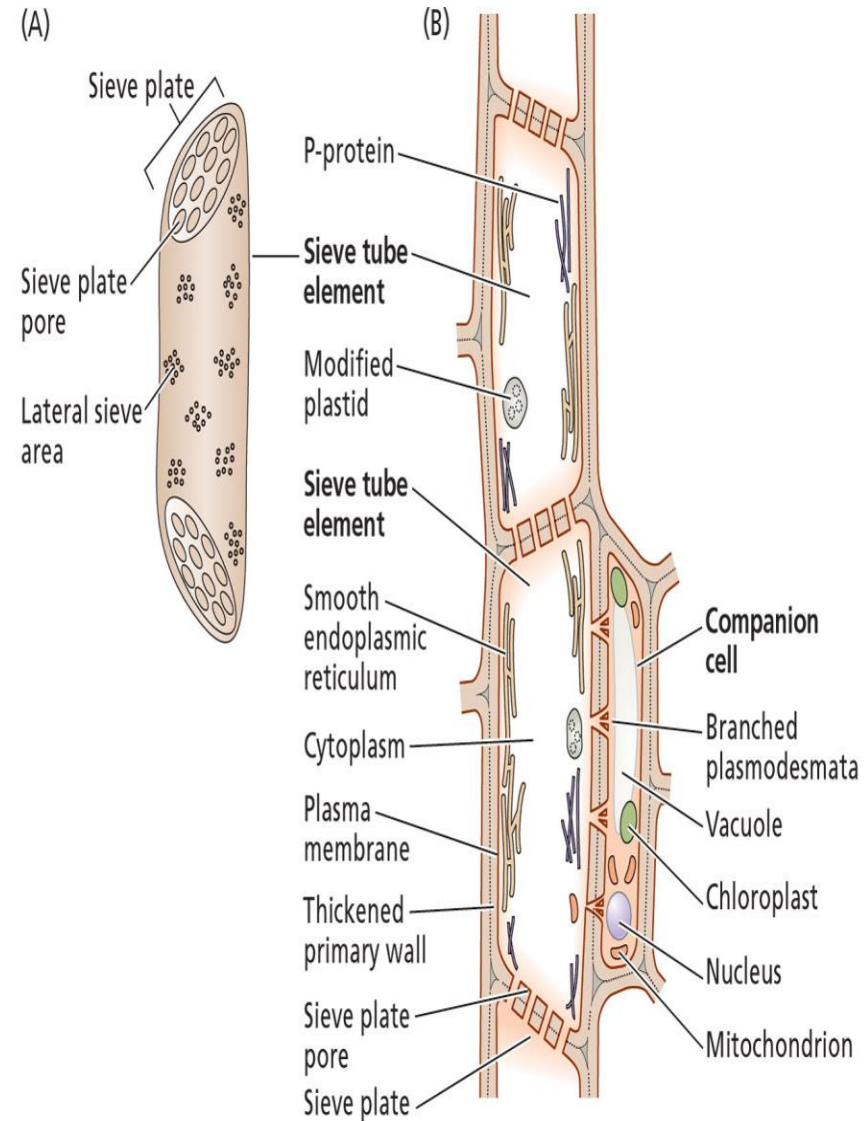
# Sugars that are in phloem (polymers)

- The most common transported sugar is ***sucrose***.
  - *Made up from glucose & Fructose*
- This is a reducing sugar
  - *The ketone or aldehyde group is combined with a similar group on another sugar*
  - *Or the ketone or aldehyde group is reduced to an alcohol*
    - D-Mannitol
- Most of the other mobile sugars transported contain Sucrose bound to varying numbers of ***Galactose*** units

# Phloem transport requires specialized, living cells

- **Companion cells:**

- Role in transport of photosynthesis products from producing cells in mature leaves to sieve plates of the small vein of the leaf
- Synthesis of the various proteins used in the phloem
- Contain many, many mitochondria for cellular respiration to provide the cellular energy required for active transport
- There are three types
  - Ordinary companion cells
  - Transfer cells
  - Intermediary cells



# The Pressure-Flow Model

Translocation is thought to move at 1 meter per hour

– *Diffusion too slow for this speed*

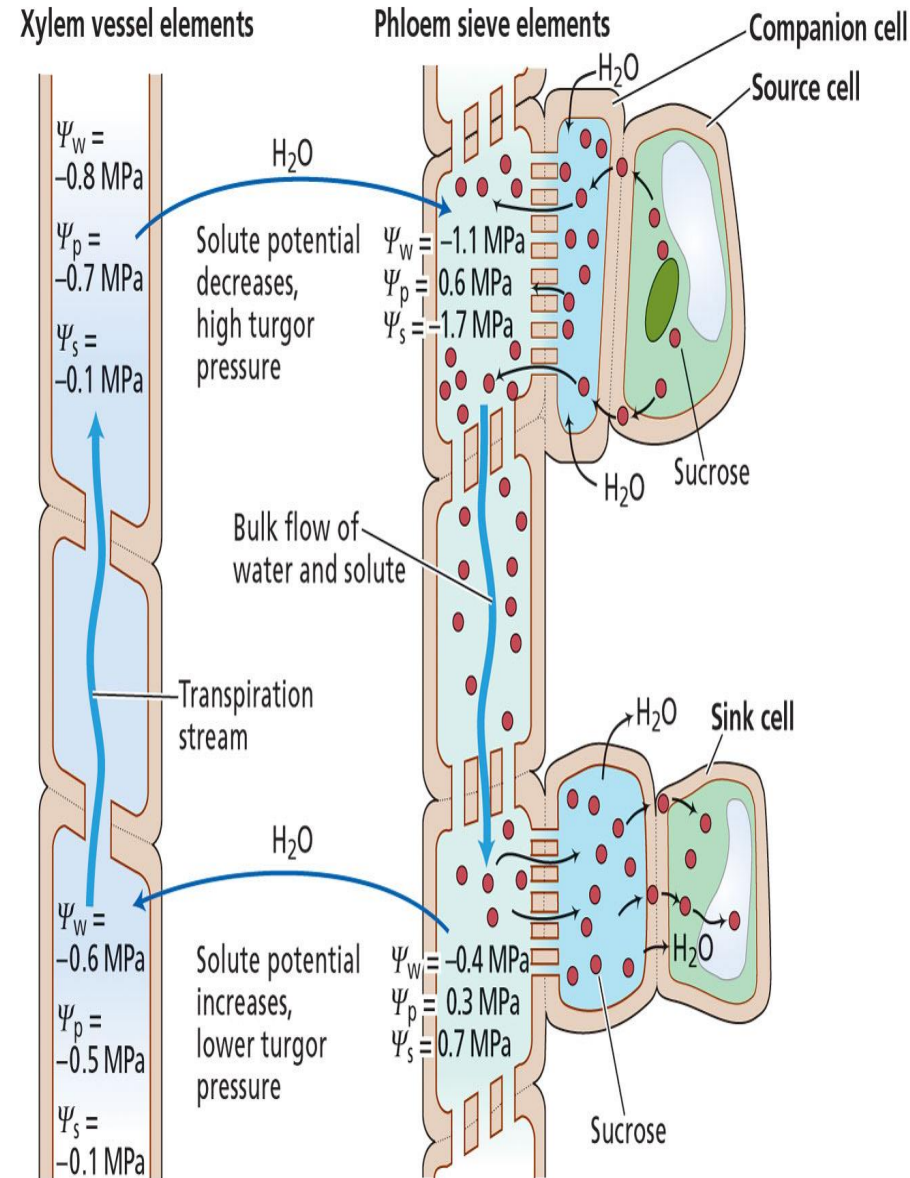
- The flow is driven by an osmotically generated pressure gradient between the **source** and the **sink**.

- **Source**

- Sugars (red dots) is actively loaded into the sieve element-companion cell complex
  - *Called phloem loading*

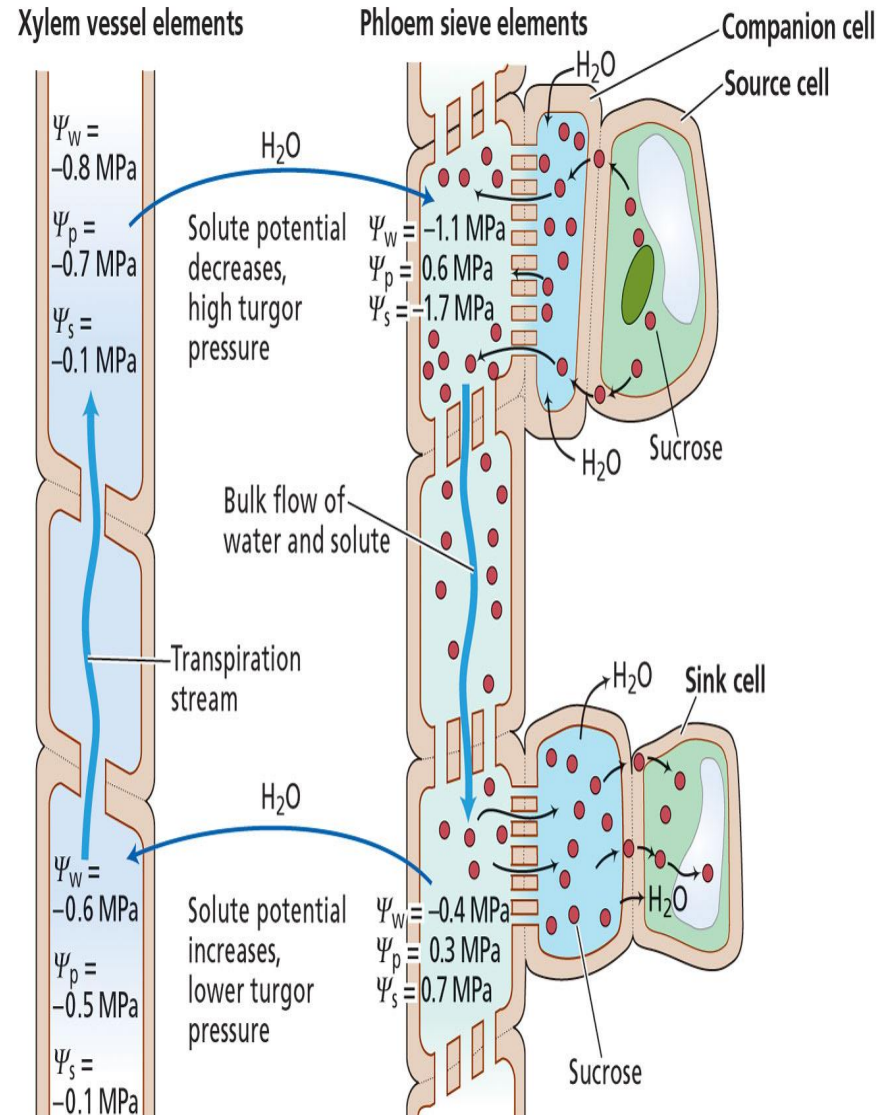
- **Sink**

- Sugars are unloaded
  - *Called phloem unloading*



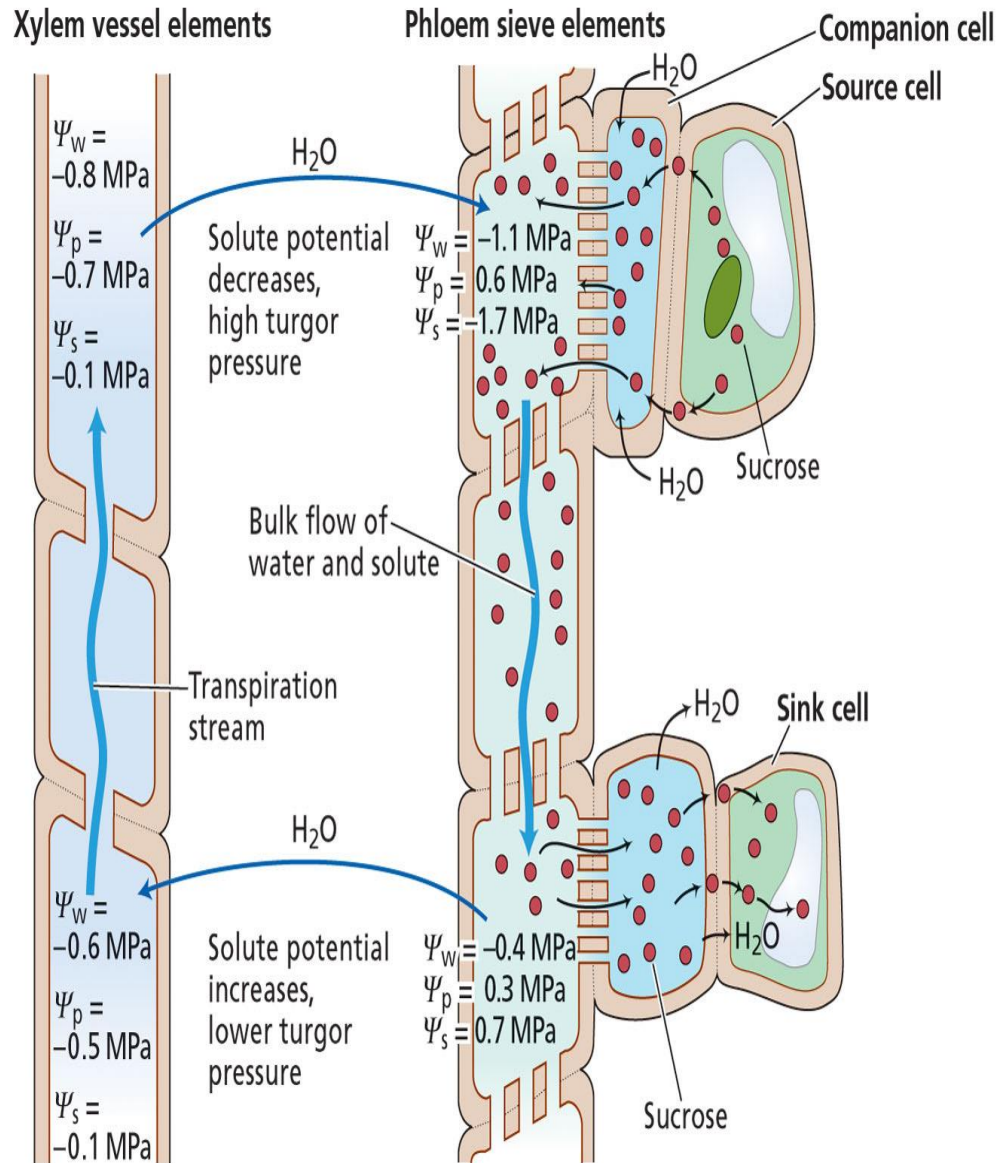
# The Pressure-Flow Model

- $\Psi_w = \Psi_s + \Psi_p + \Psi_g$
- In **source tissue**, energy driven phloem loading leads to a buildup of sugars
  - Makes **low (-ve)** solute potential
  - Causes a steep **drop** in water potential
  - In response to this new water potential gradient, water enters sieve elements from xylem
    - Thus phloem turgor pressure increases
- In **sink tissue**, phloem unloading leads to lower sugar conc.
  - Makes a **higher (+ve)** solute potential
  - Water potential **increases**
  - Water leaves phloem and enters sink sieve elements and xylem
    - Thus phloem turgor pressure decreases



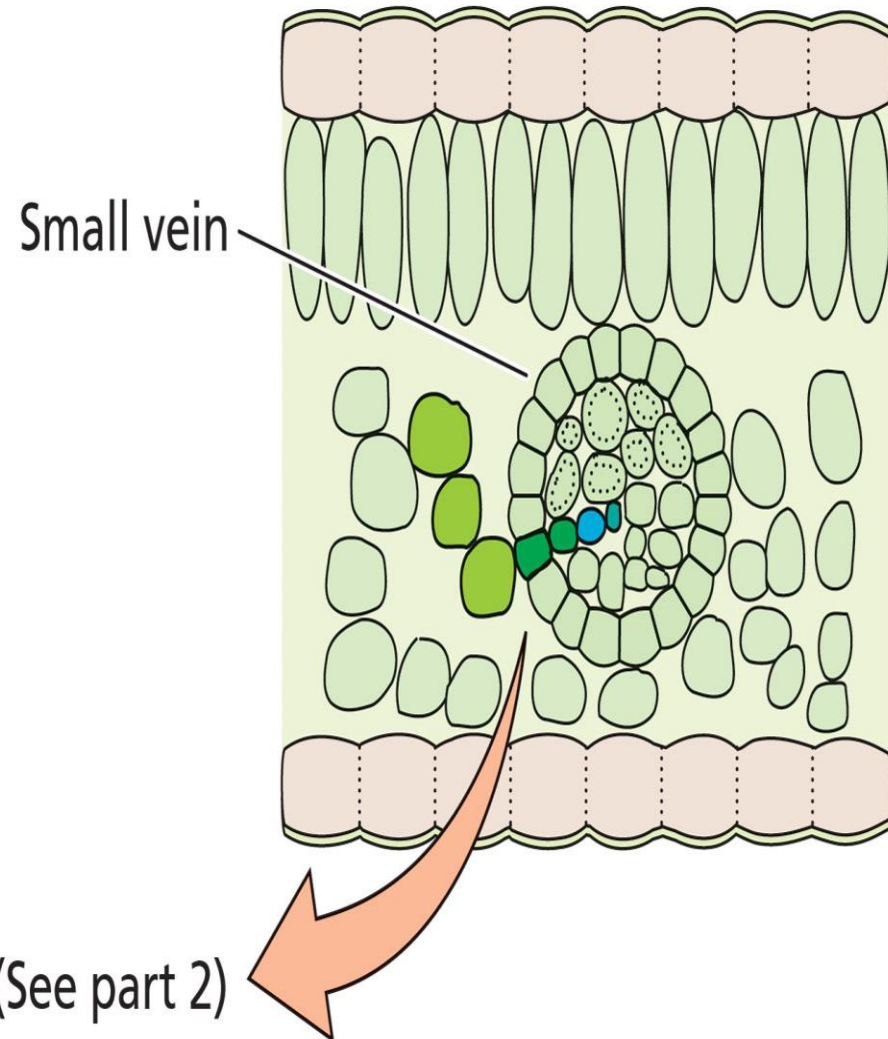
# The Pressure-Flow Model

- So, the translocation pathway has cross walls
  - Allow water to move from xylem to phloem and back again
  - If absent- **pressure difference from source to sink would quickly equilibrate**
- Water is moving in the phloem by **Bulk Flow**
  - No membranes are crossed from one sieve tube to another
  - Solutes are moving at the same rate as the water
- Water movement is driven by **pressure gradient** and **NOT water potential gradient**



# Phloem Loading: Where do the solutes come from?

- Triose phosphate - formed from photosynthesis during the day is moved from chloroplast to cytosol
- At night, this compound, together with glucose from stored starch, is converted to sucrose
  - **Both these steps occur in a mesophyll cell**
- Sucrose then moves from the mesophyll cell via the smallest veins in the leaf to near the sieve elements
  - Known as short distance pathway
  - **only moves two or three cells**

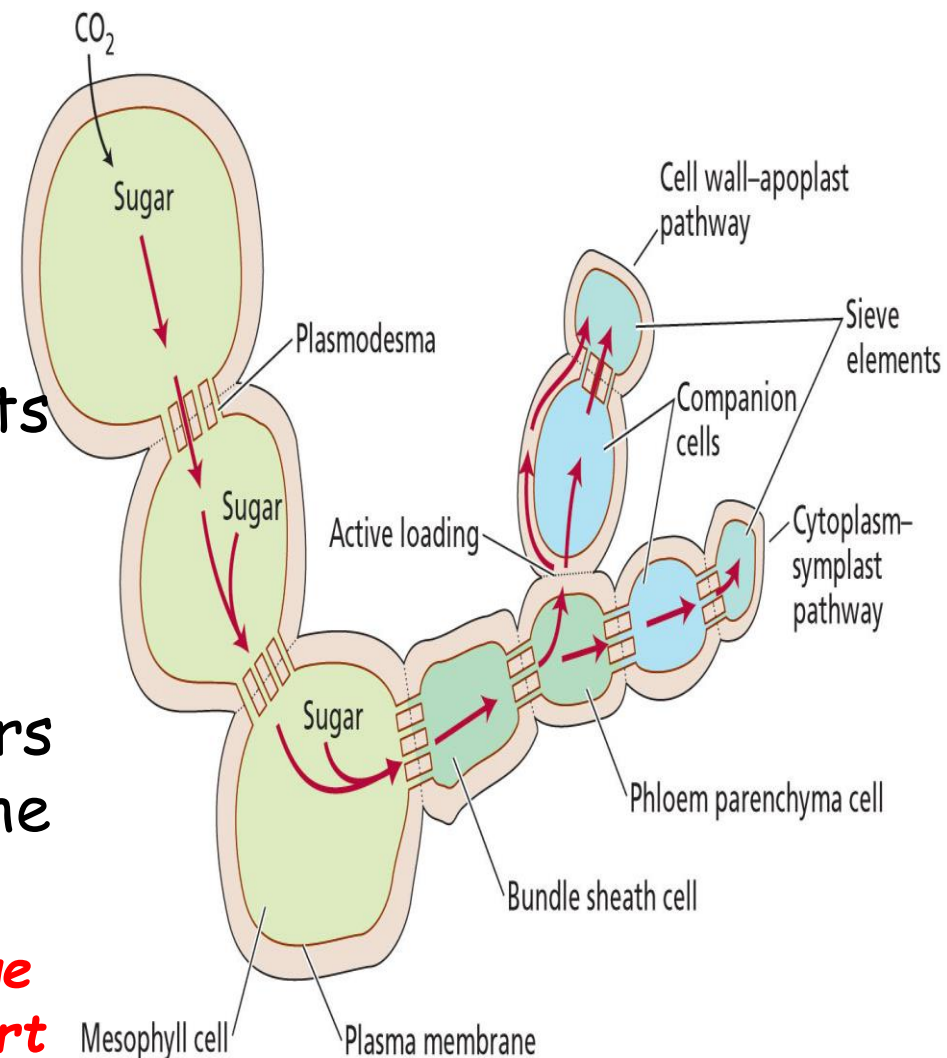


(See part 2)

# Phloem Loading:

## Where do the solutes come from?

- In a process called **sieve element loading**, sugars are transported into the sieve elements and companion cells
- Sugars become more concentrated in sieve elements and companion cells than in mesophyll cells
- Once in the sieve element /companion cell complex sugars are transported away from the source tissue - called **export**
  - **Translocation to the sink tissue is called long distance transport**

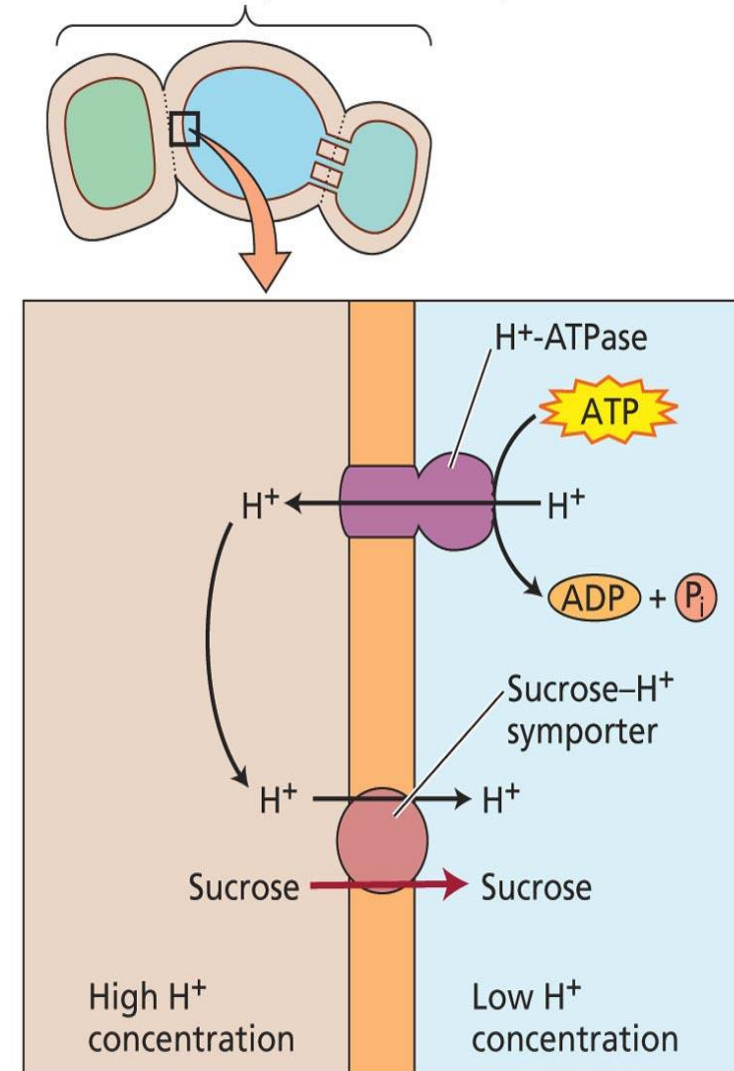




# Phloem Loading: Where do the solutes come from?

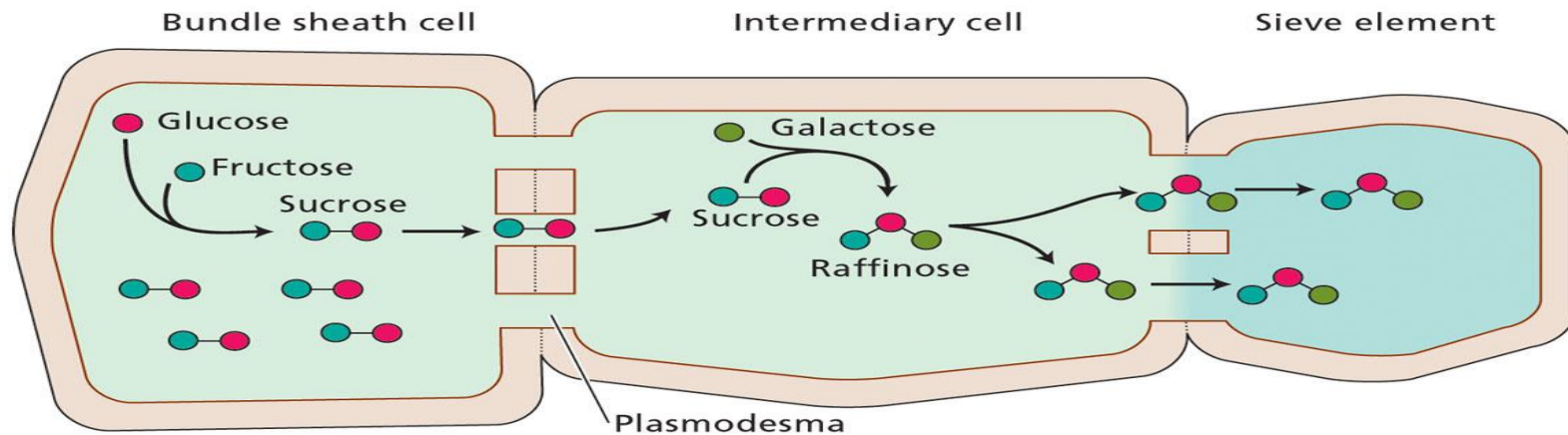
- Movement is via either apoplast or symplast
- Via *apoplastic pathway* requires
- **Active transport against its chemical potential gradient**
- **Involves a sucrose- $H^+$  symporter**
  - The energy dissipated by protons moving back into the cell is coupled to the uptake of sucrose

Sieve element-companion cell complex



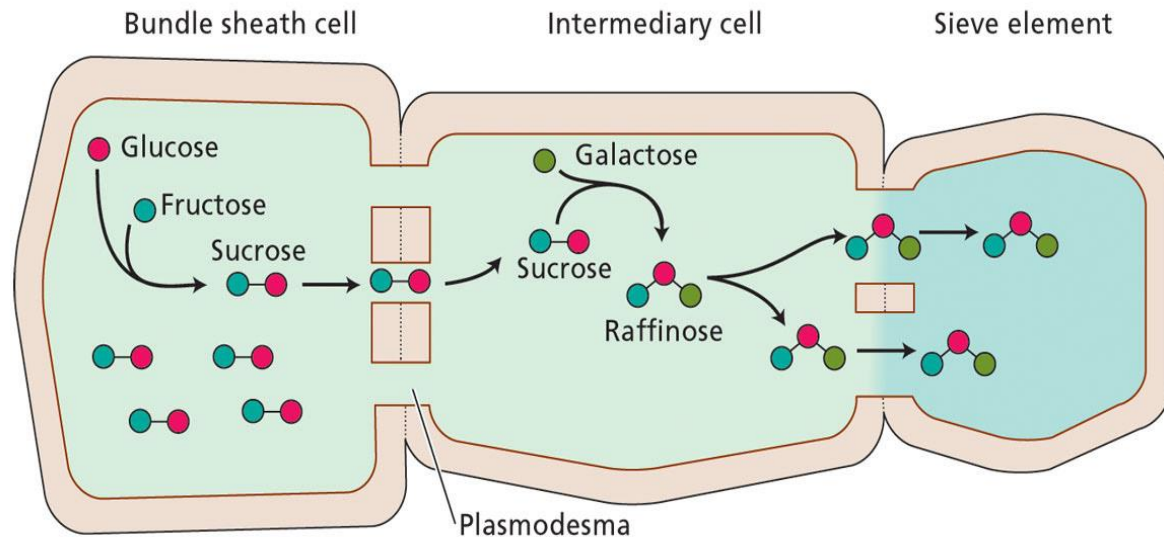
# Symplastic phloem loading

- Depends on plant species
  - *Dependant on species that transport sugars other than sucrose*
- Requires the presence of open plasmodesmata between different cells in the pathway
- Dependant on plant species with intermediary companion cells



# Symplastic phloem loading

- Sucrose, synthesized in mesophyll, diffuses into intermediary cells
- Here **Raffinose** is synthesized. Due to larger size, can **NOT** diffuse back into the mesophyll
- Raffinose and sucrose are able to diffuse into sieve element



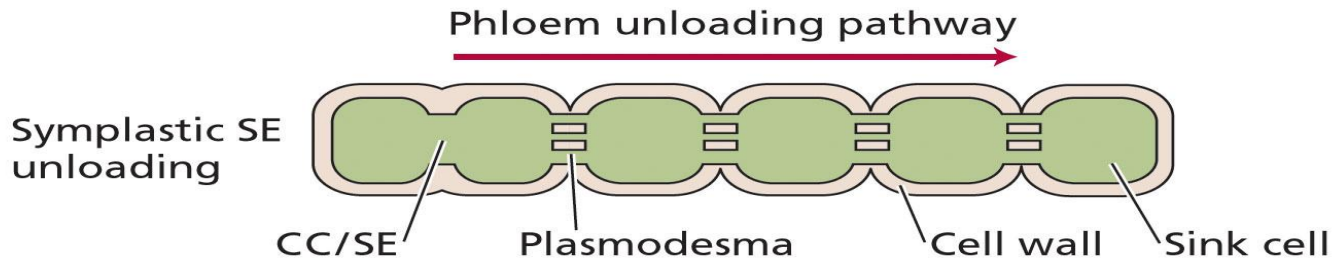
# Phloem unloading

- Three steps
- (1) *Sieve element unloading*:
  - Transported sugars leave the sieve elements of sink tissue
- (2) *Short distance transport*:
  - After sieve element unloading, sugars transported to cells in the sink by means of a short distance pathway
- (3) *storage and metabolism*:
  - Sugars are stored or metabolized in sink cells

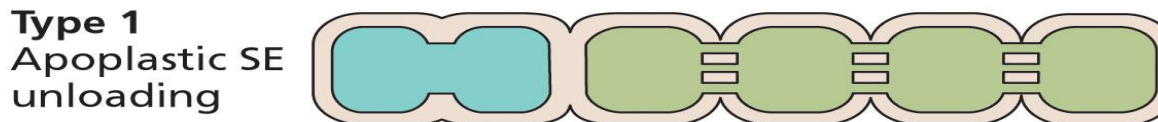
# Phloem unloading

- Also can occur by symplastic or apoplastic pathways
- *Varies greatly from growing vegetative organs (root tips and young leaves) to storage tissue (roots and stems) to reproductive organs*
- *Symplastic:*
- Appears to be a completely symplastic pathway in young dicot leaves
- Again, moves through open plasmodesmata

## (A) Symplastic phloem unloading



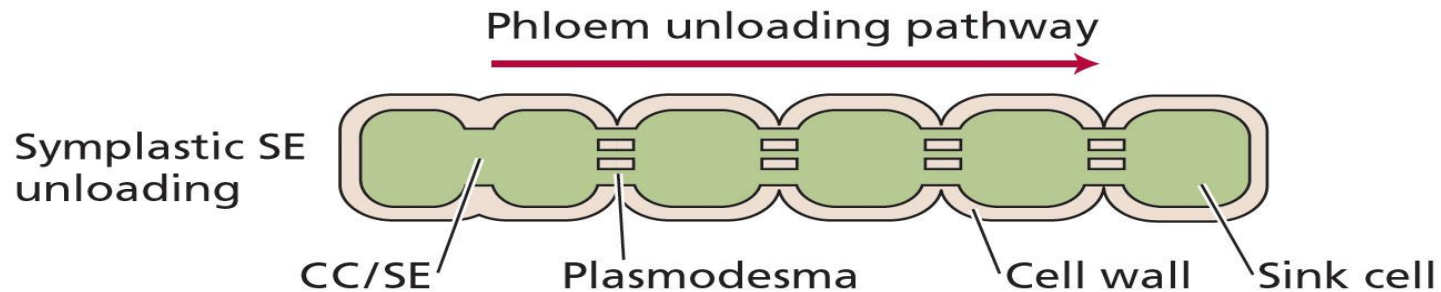
## (B) Apoplastic phloem unloading



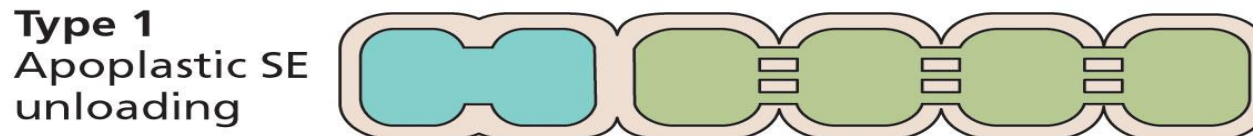
# Phloem unloading

- **Apoplastic:** three types
- (1) [B] One step, transport from the sieve element-companion cell complex to successive sink cells, occurs in the apoplast.
- Once sugars are taken back into the symplast of adjoining cells transport is symplastic

## (A) Symplastic phloem unloading



## (B) Apoplastic phloem unloading

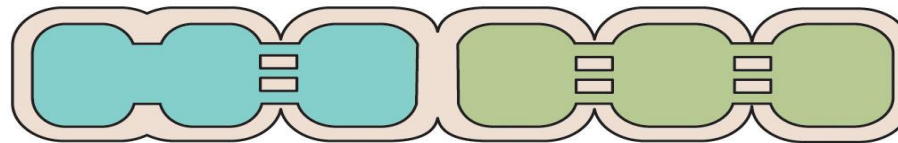


# Phloem unloading

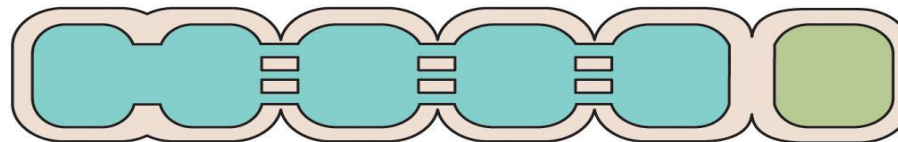
- **Apoplastic**: three types
- (2) [A] involves an apoplastic step close to the sieve element companion cell.
- (3) [B] involves an apoplastic step farther from the sieve element companion cell
- **Both involve movement through the plant cell wall**

## (B) Apoplastic phloem unloading

**Type 2A**  
Symplastic SE  
unloading

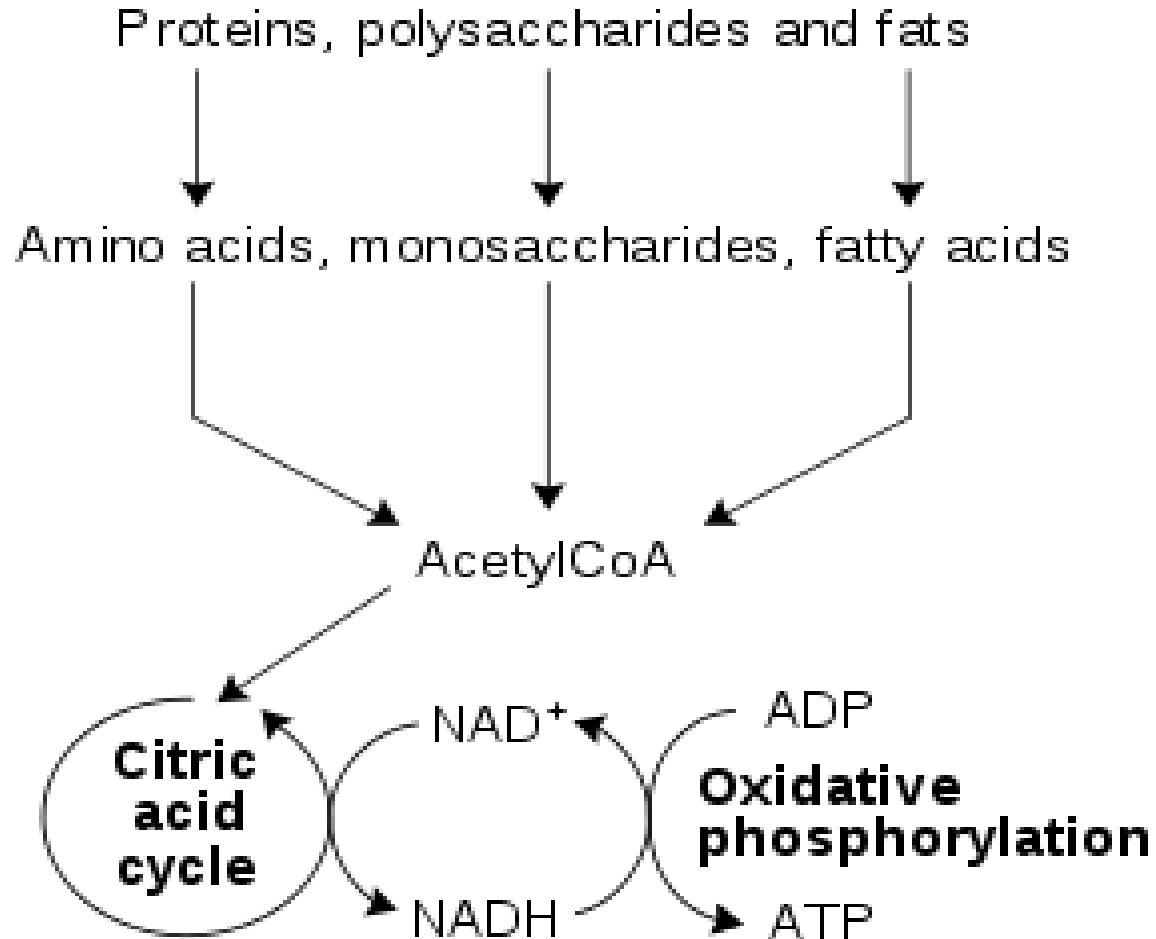


**Type 2B**  
Symplastic SE  
unloading

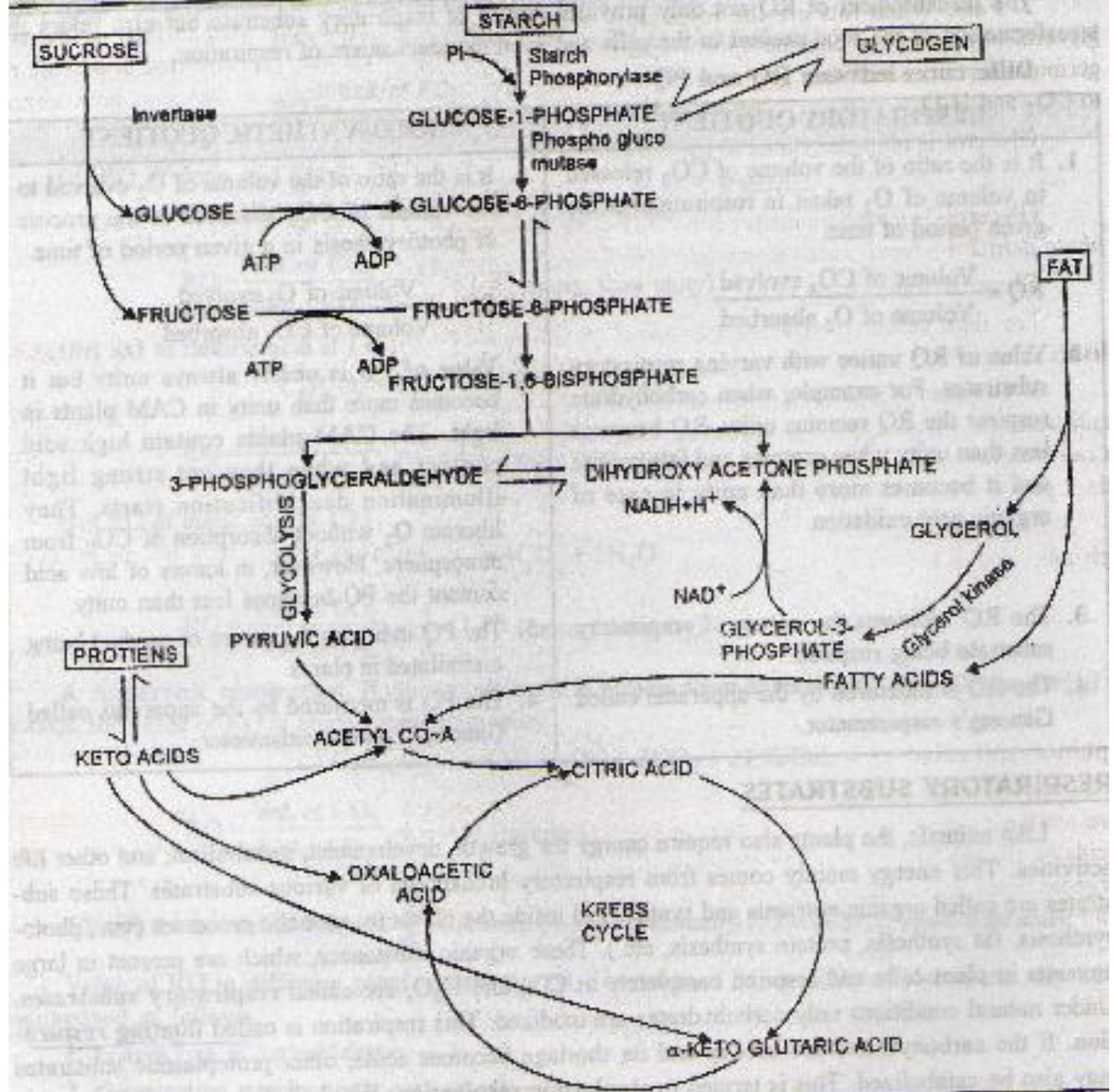


# RESPIRATION

## Outline of catabolism



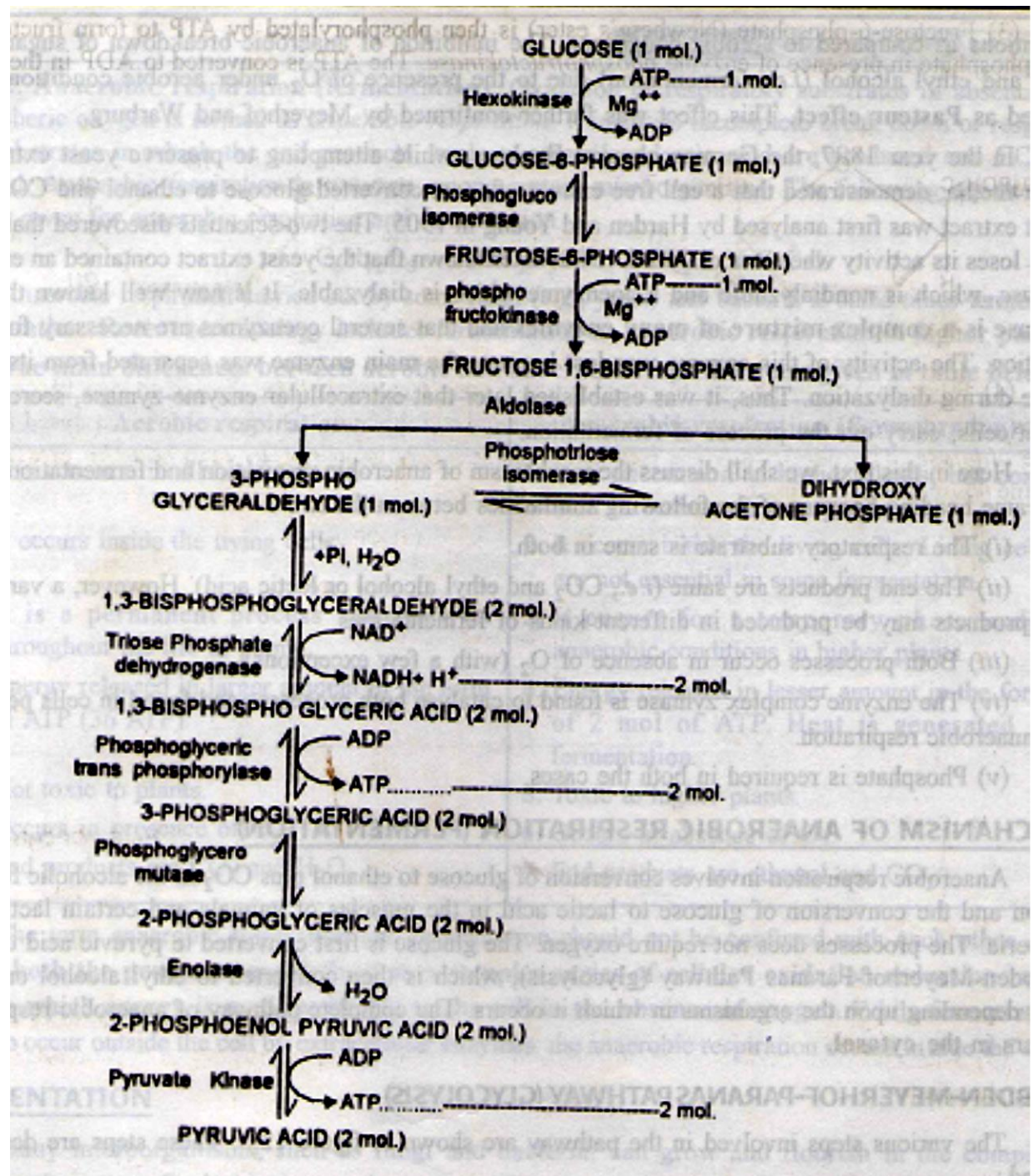




# Significance

- Release on **5.2%** of the total energy
- Very few organisms depend only on glycolysis completely
- Only metabolic pathway common to all organisms, all cells
- Anaerobic pathway--- Can be depended when oxygen limitations occur
- Provides building blocks
- Most ancient pathway
- Evolutionary significance- most conserved pathway

# Glycolysis



## Role of NADH in sustaining glycolysis

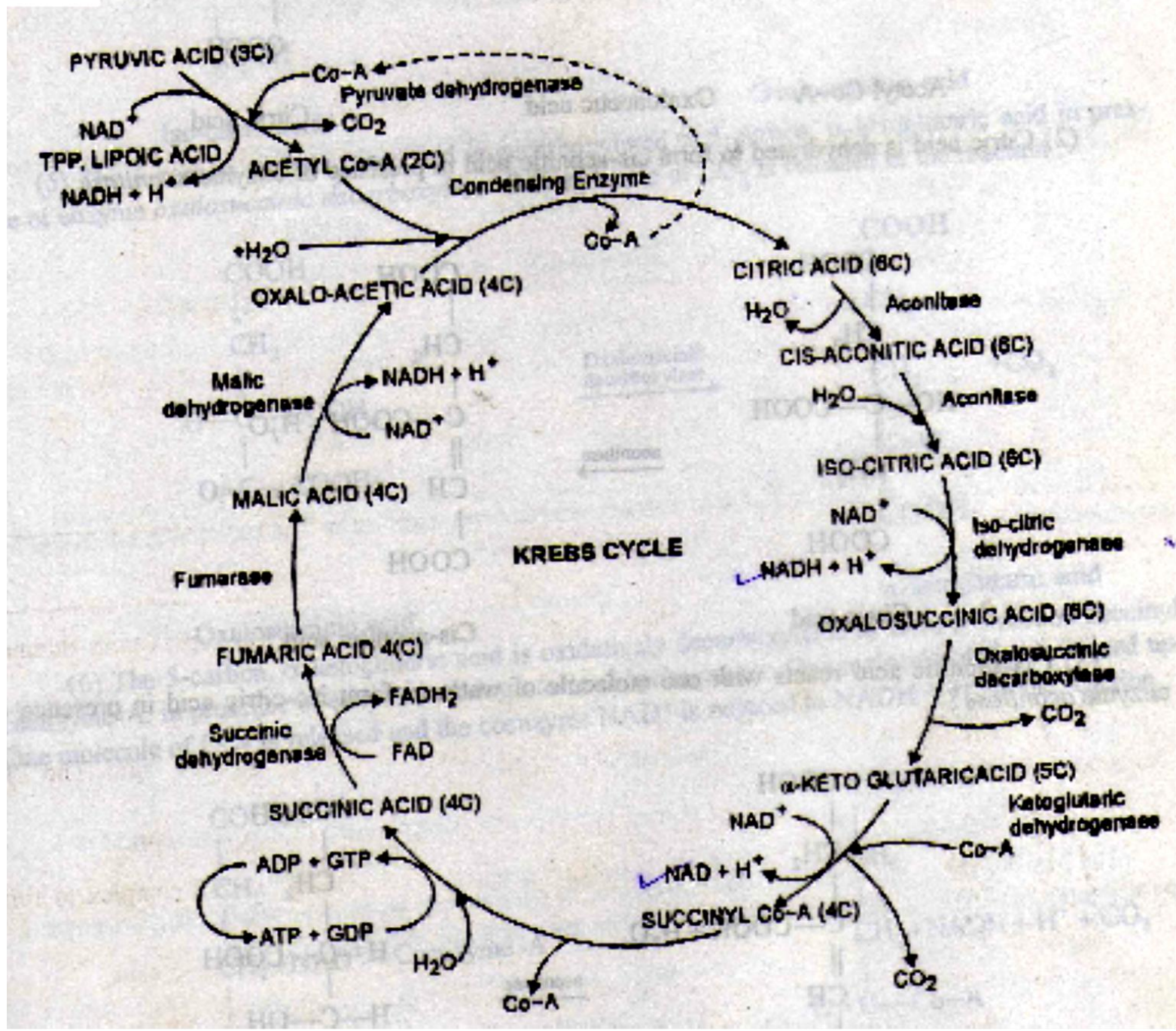
- For every glucose, 2 NADH molecules are formed
- NAD depletion occurs during anaerobic pathway
- Pyruvic acid + NADH-----lactic acid + NAD

# Energy Balance Sheet

- Glucose + 2Pi + 2 ADP +2NAD ----- 2 pyruvate +2ATP + 2NADH
- Energy required for synthesis of 2 ATP -----100 KJ
- Release ---- 195 KJ
- Efficiency **50%**

# Fate of pyruvic acid

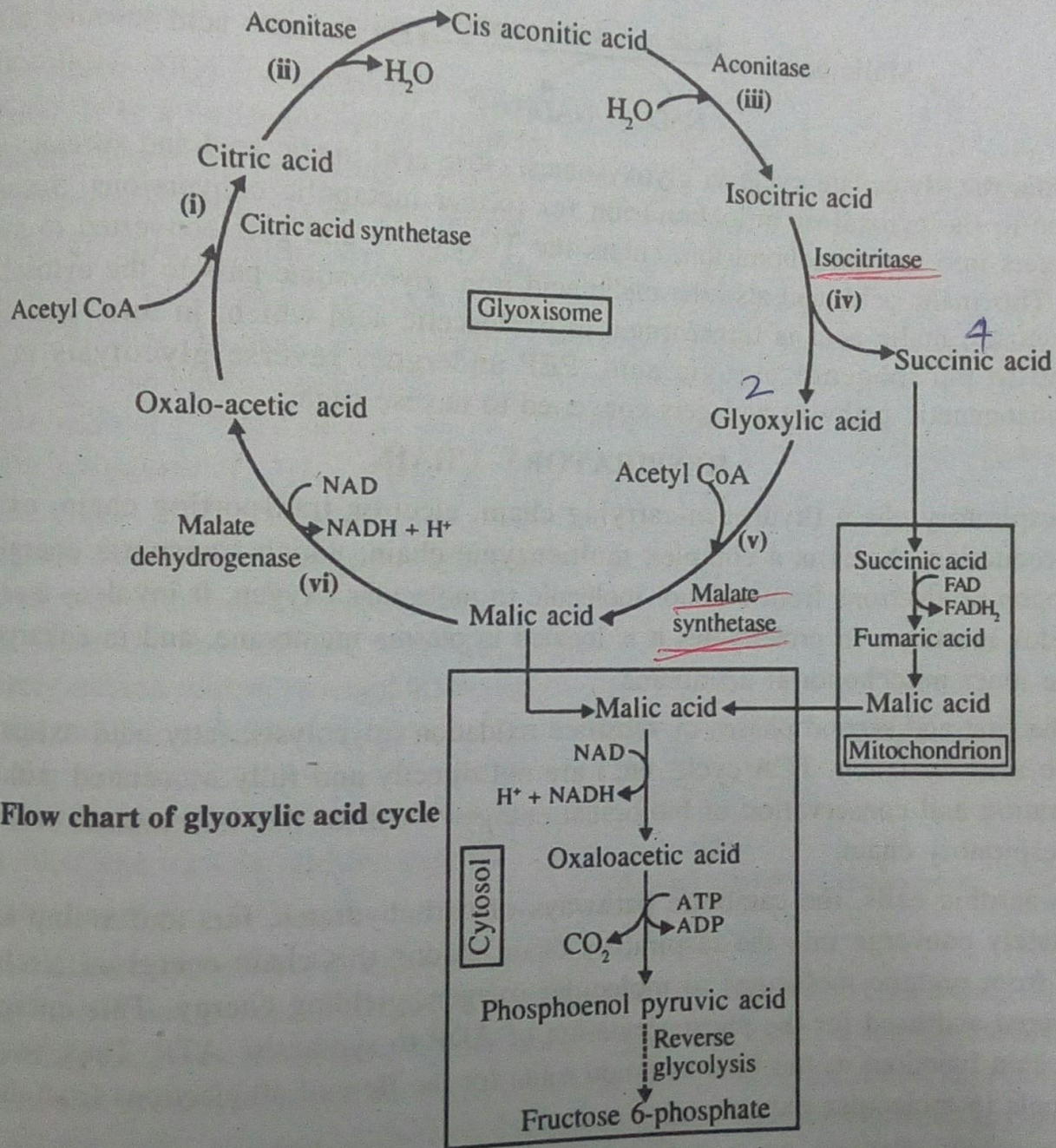
- Ethanol
- Lactic acid
- Acetyl CoA

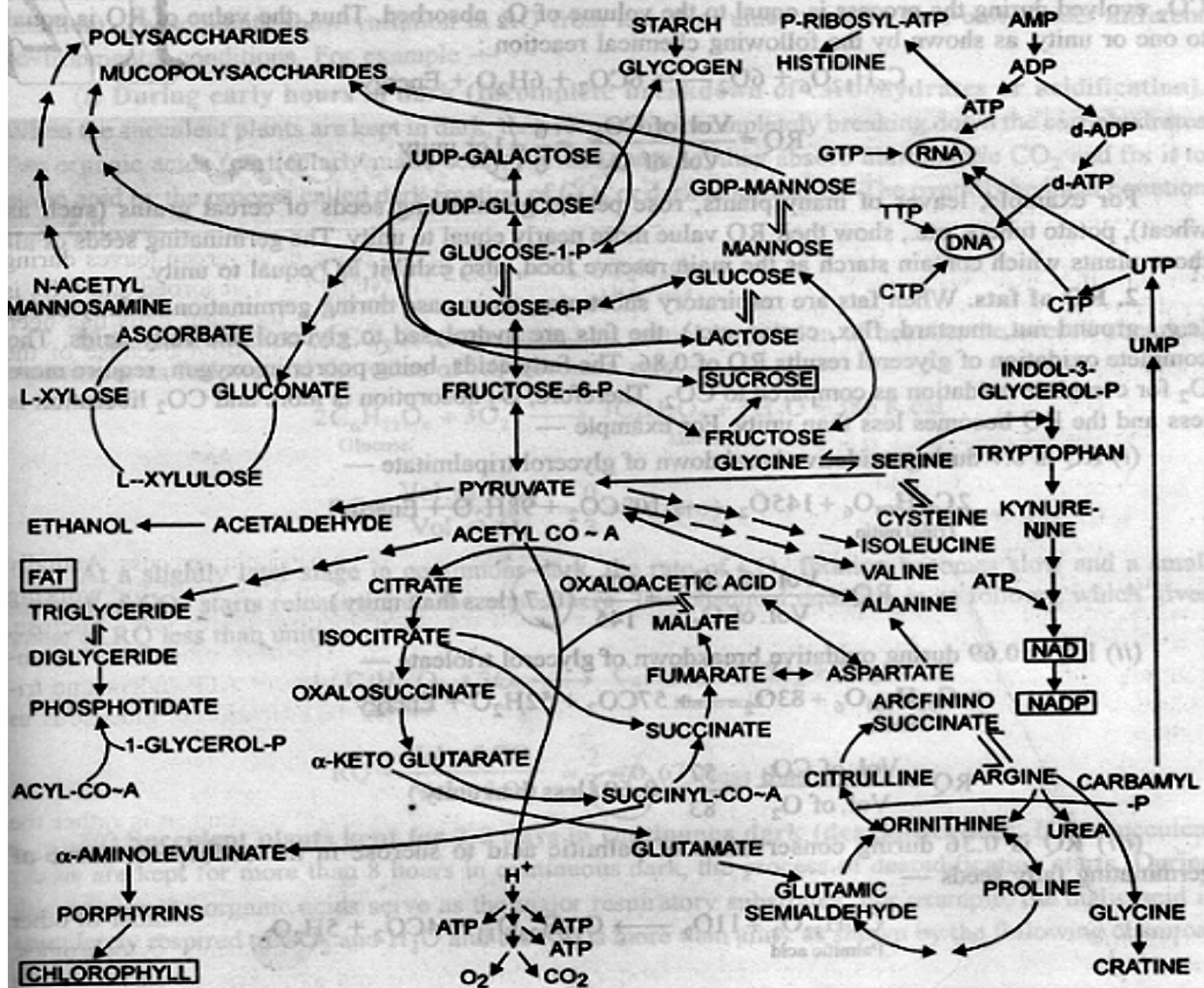


# Efficiency

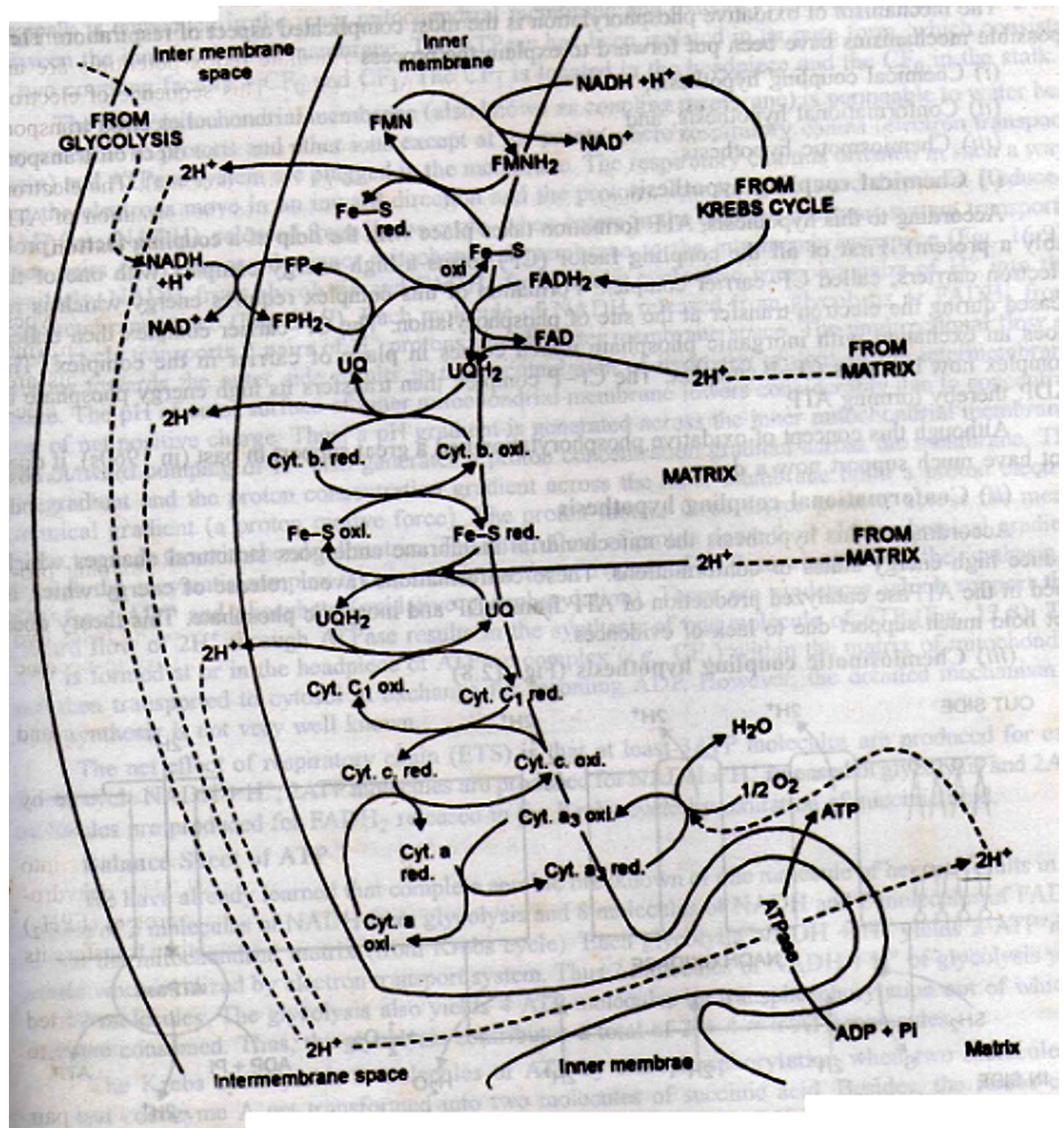
- Production ---- 209000 cal
- Net gain ----- 84000 cal
- Efficiency **40%**

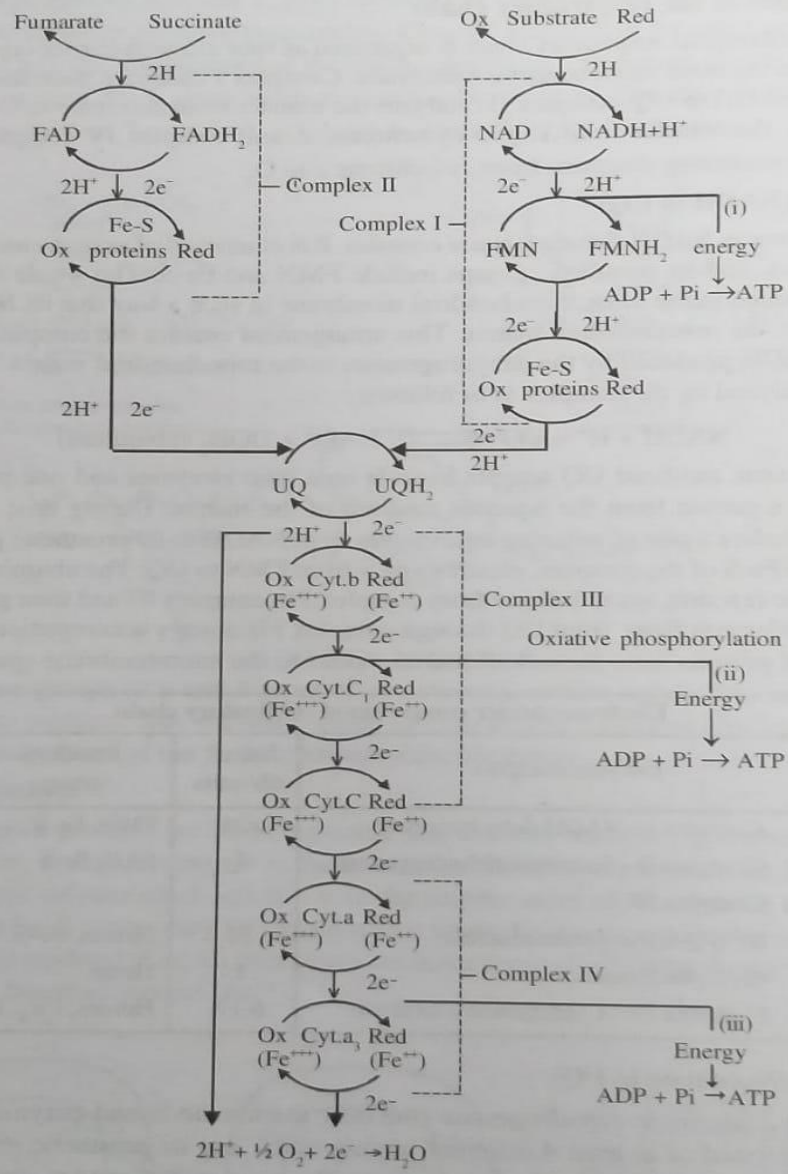






# ETS & Oxidative phosphorylation





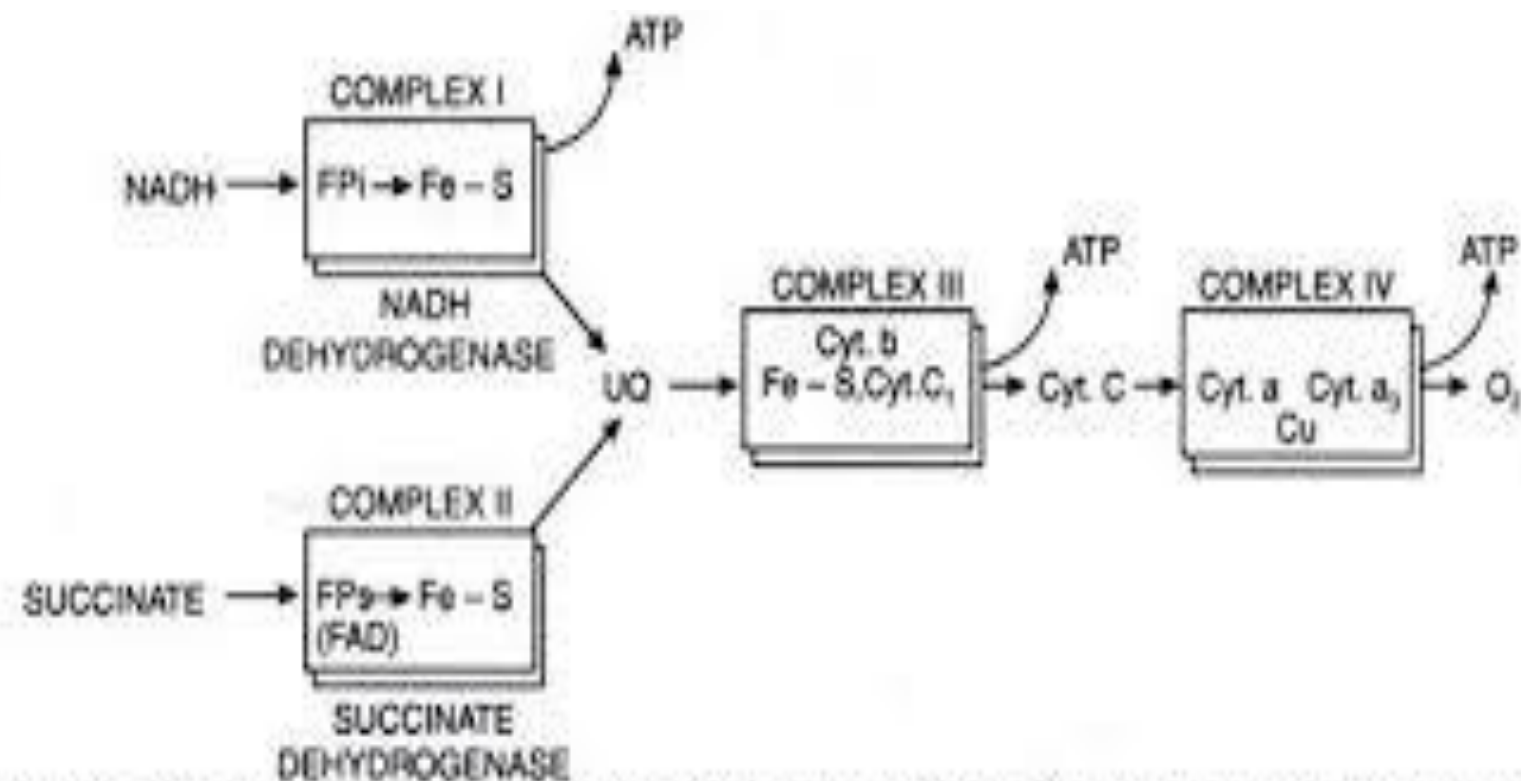
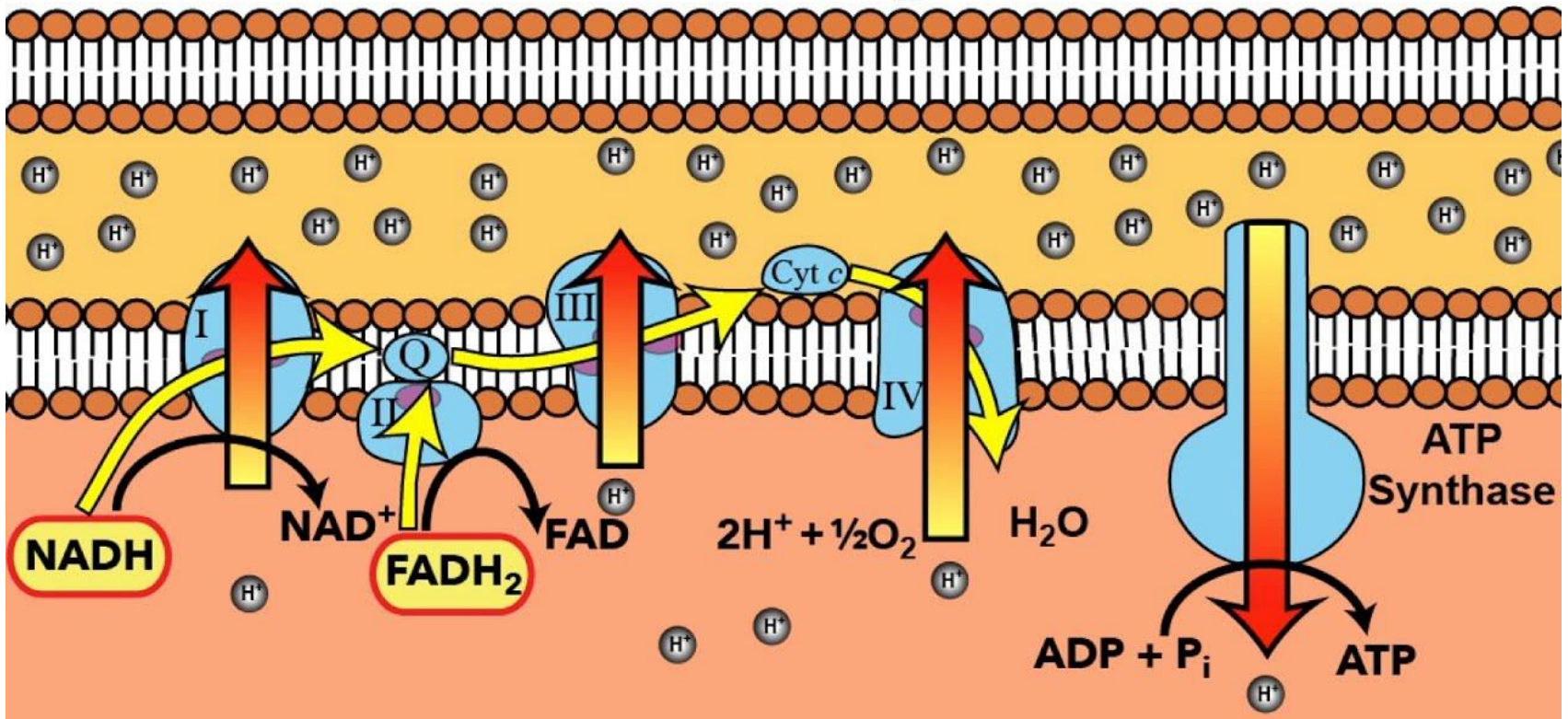
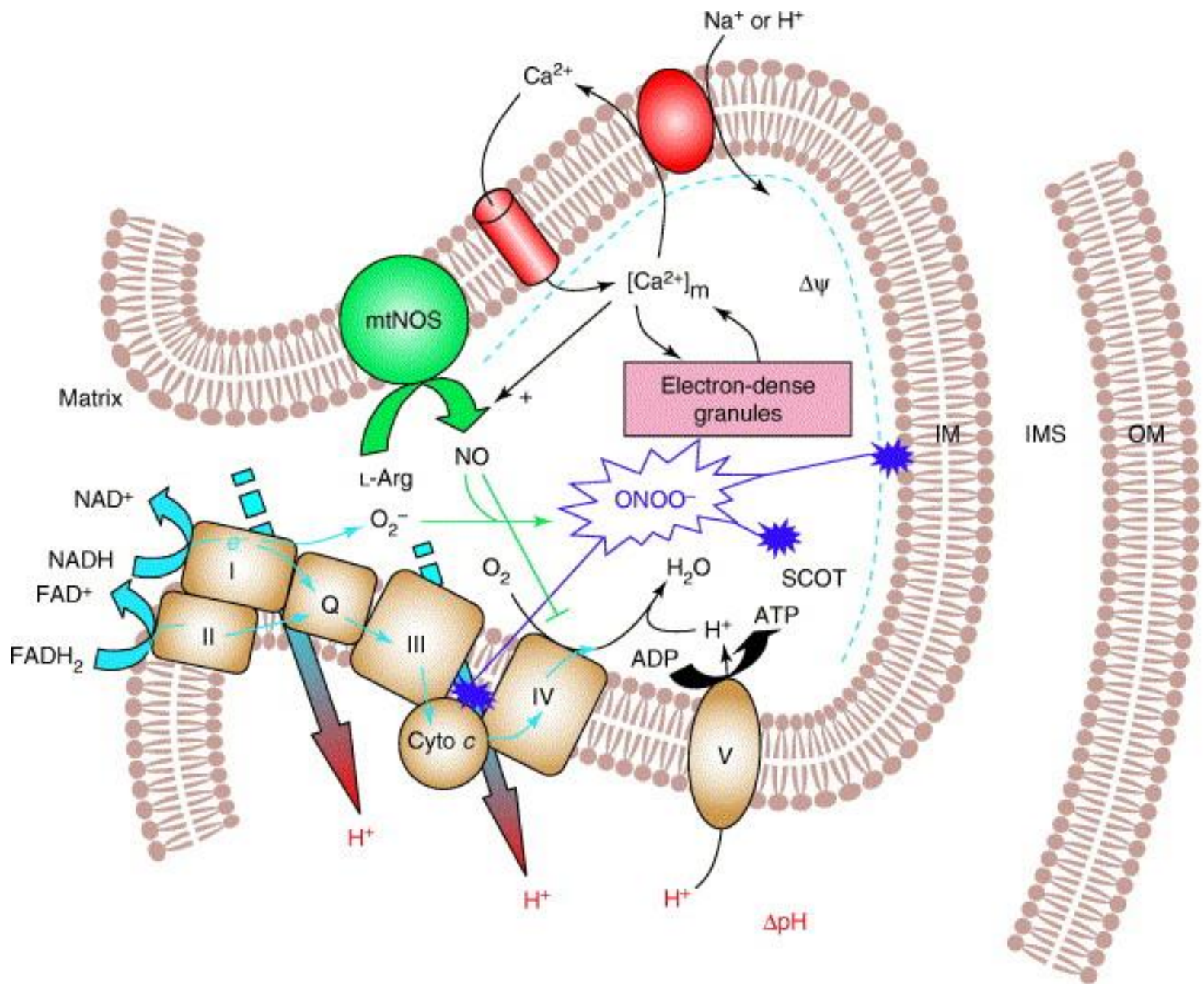
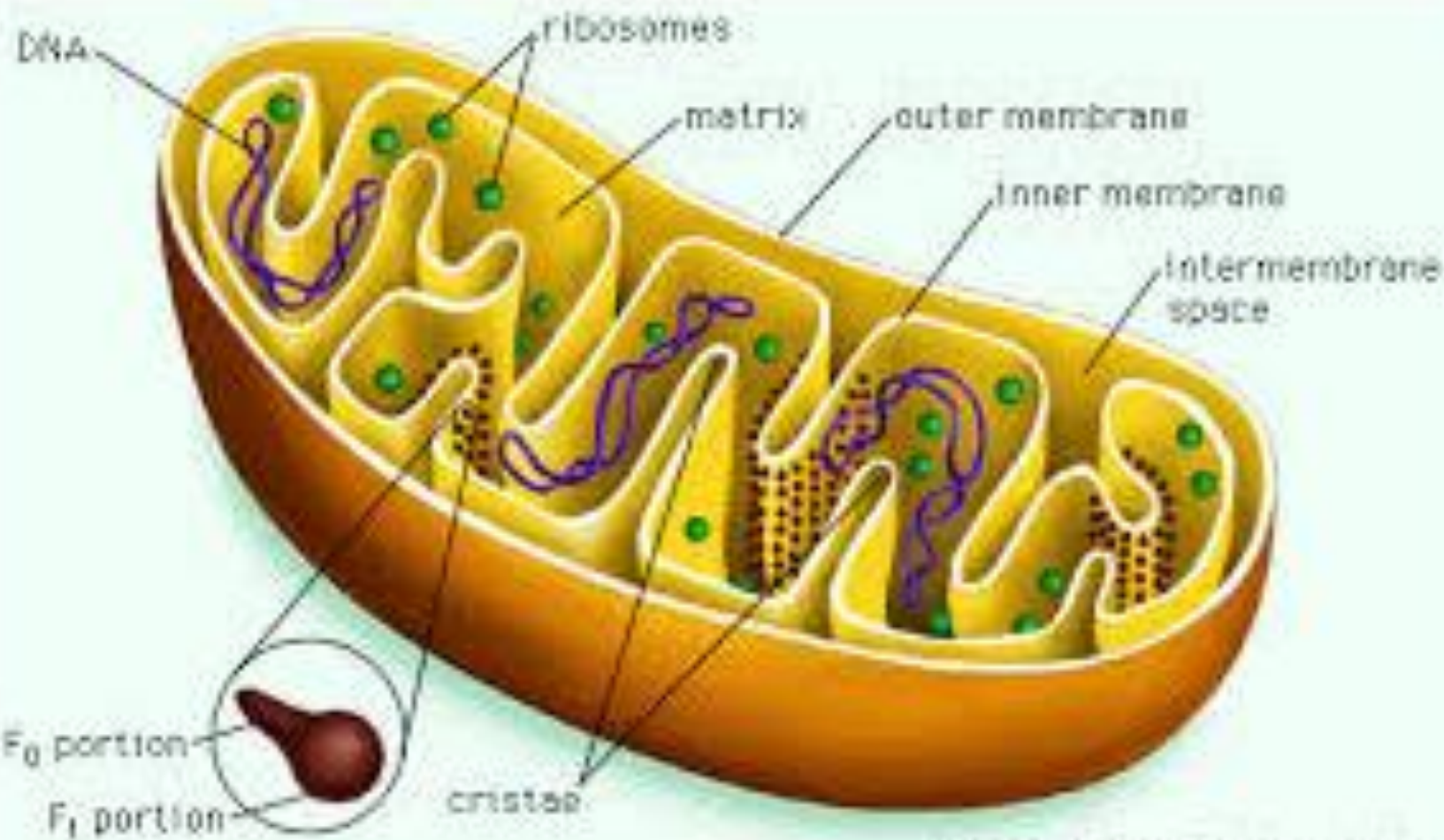


Fig. 16.6. Components of electron transport chain in animal mitochondria and their functional arrangement into the four complexes (see text for abbreviations).

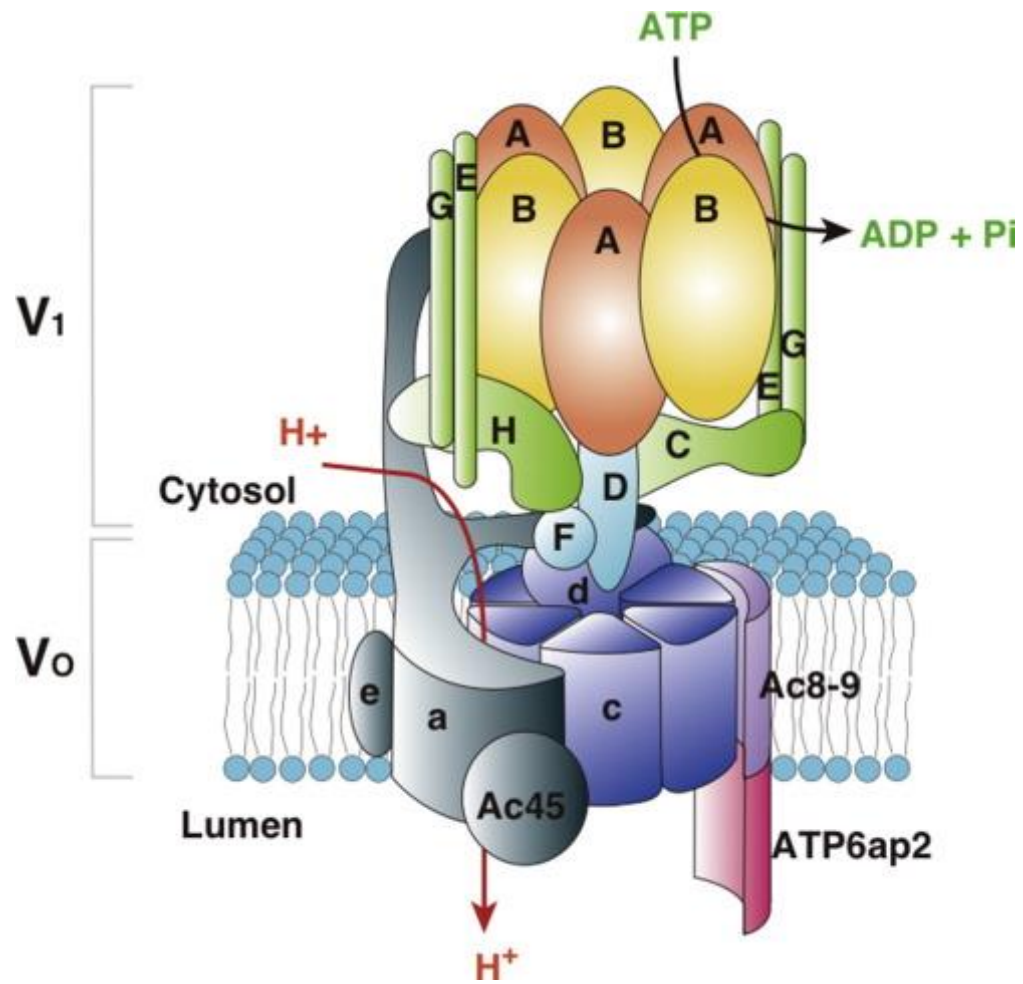
# Electron Transport Chain



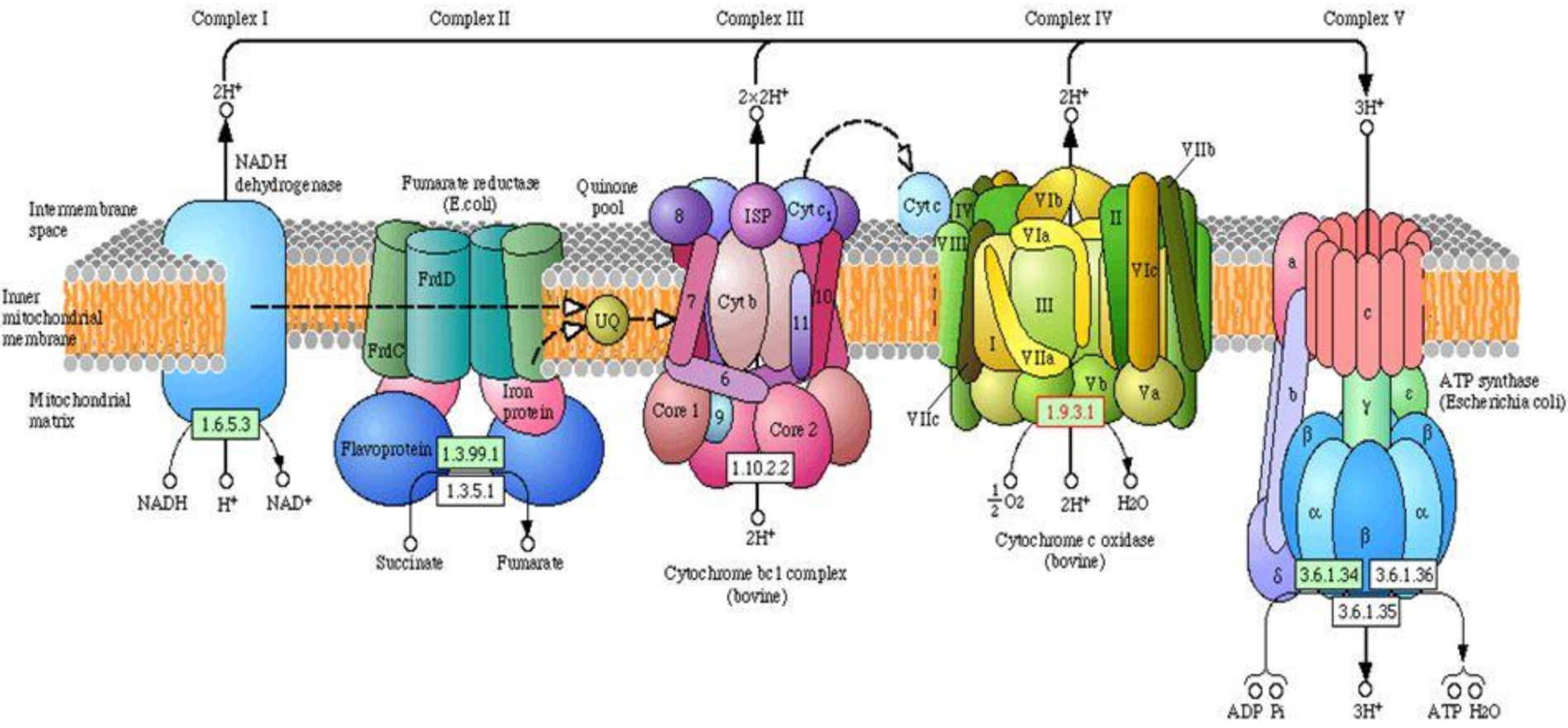






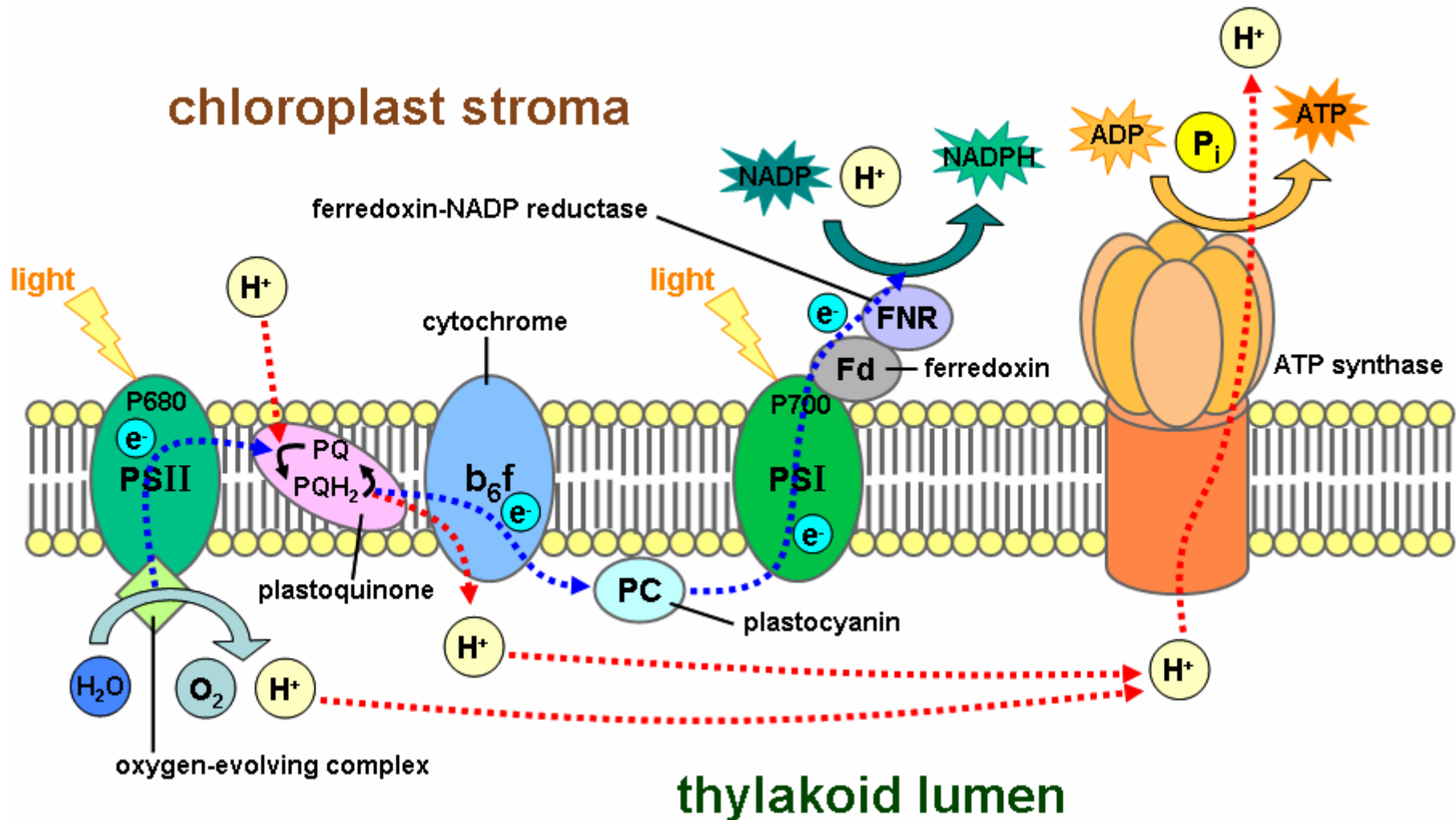


# Respiratory chain subunits encoded by two genomes: Nuclear and Mitochondria



Complex	Common Name	Mito/nuclear
I	NADH DH	7/43
II	SDH	0/4
III	cyt c red	1/11
IV	COX	3/13
V	ATPase	2/13

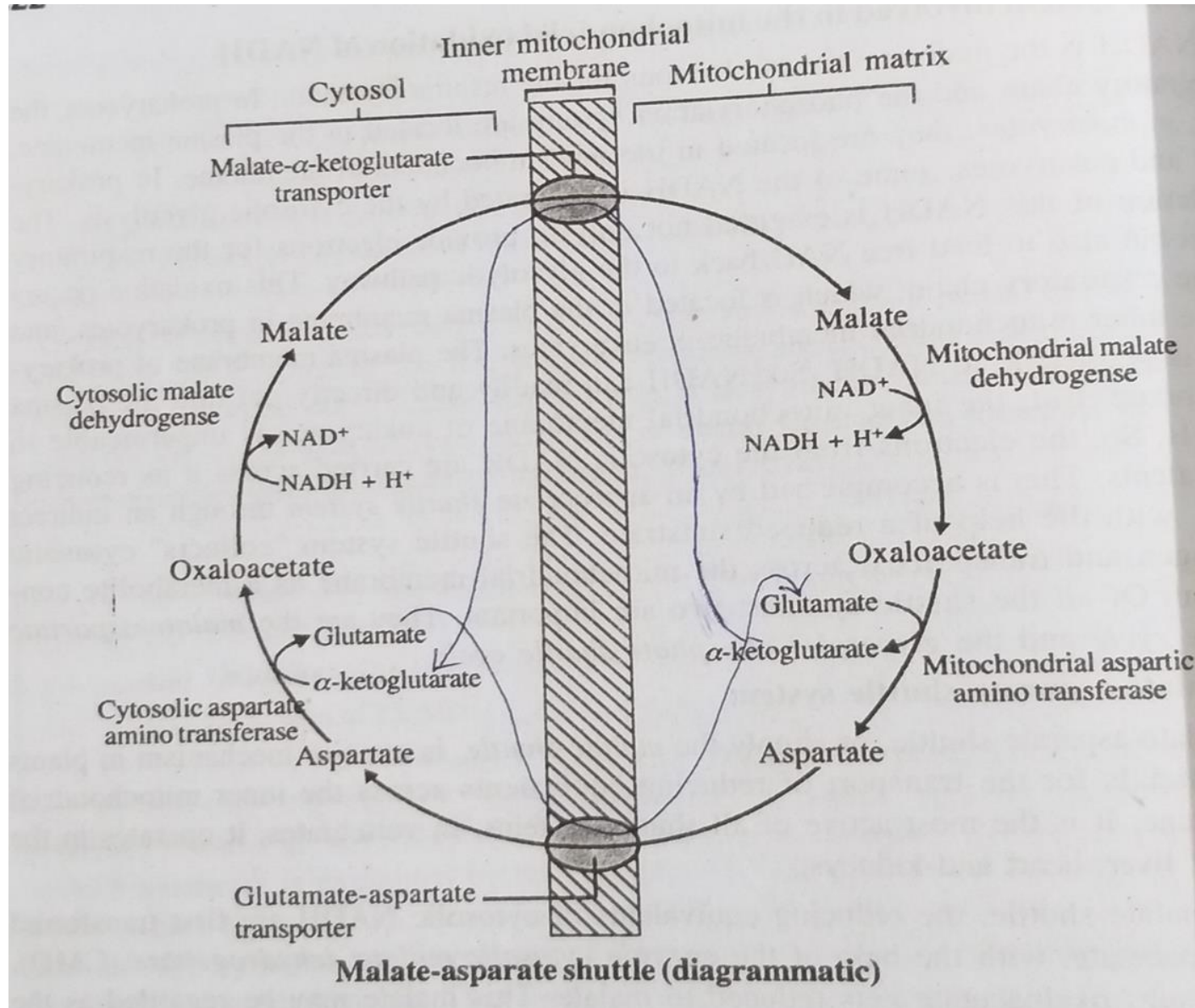
# Non Cyclic Electron Transport & Photophosphorylation

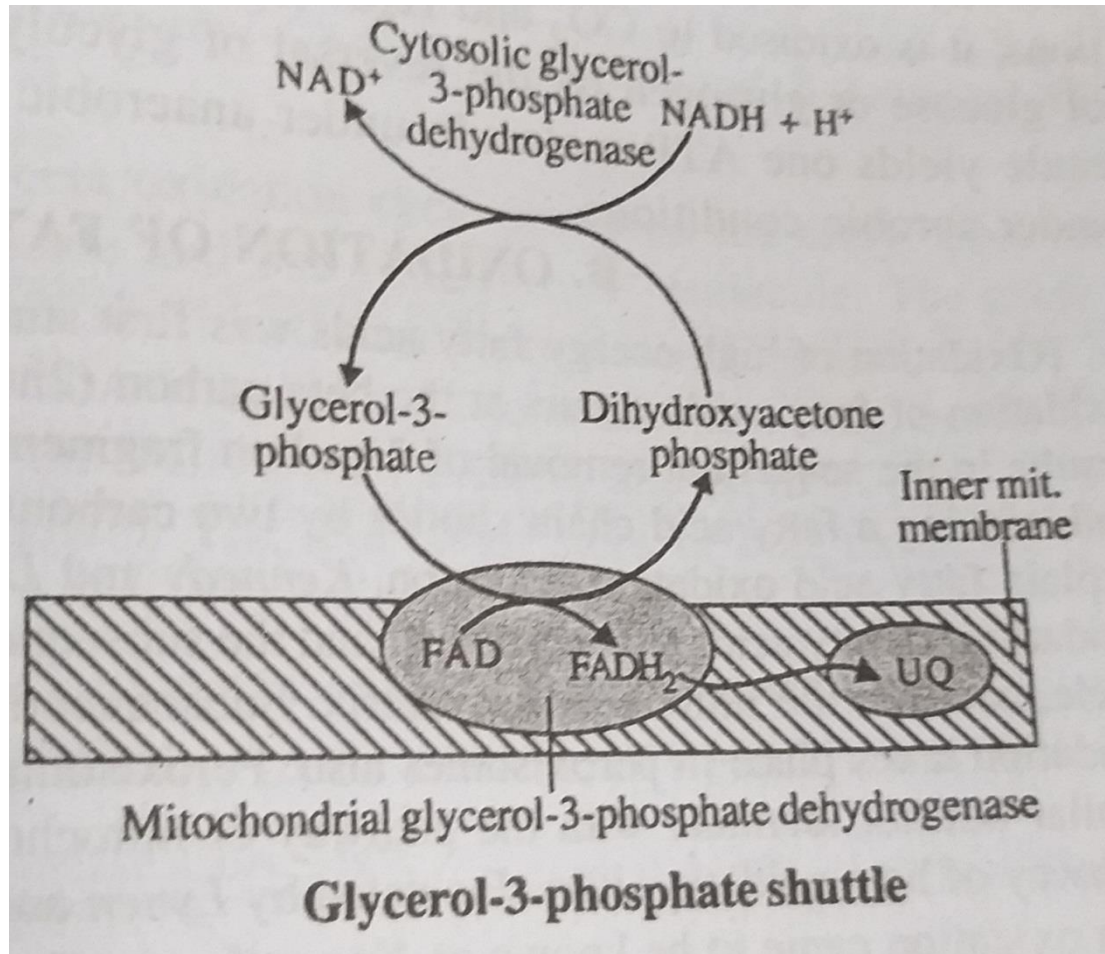


# Mechanism of Oxidative Phosphorylation

- **1) Chemical coupling hypothesis**
- with the help of a **coupling factor** (probably a protein).
- coupling factor (CF) forms a high energy complex with one of the electron carriers, called **CF-carrier complex**.
- Formation of this complex requires energy which is released during the electron transfer at the site of phosphorylation.
- The CF-carrier complex then undergoes an exchange with inorganic phosphate which comes in place of carrier in the complex.
- The complex now becomes **CF-P complex**. The CF-P complex then transfers its high energy phosphate to ADP, thereby forming ATP.
- **2) Conformational coupling hypothesis**
- mitochondrial membrane undergoes structural changes which induce high energy states or conformations.
- These conformations favour release of energy which is used in the ATPase catalyzed production of ATP from ADP and inorganic phosphate.
- **3) Chemiosmotic coupling hypothesis**

# Malate aspartate shuttle





# ***NITROGEN METABOLISM***

*Nitrogen is cycled between organisms and inanimate environment*

- The principal inorganic forms of N are in an **oxidized** state
  - As **N<sub>2</sub>** in the atmosphere
  - As nitrate (**NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>**) in the soils and ocean
- All biological compounds contain N in a **reduced** form (**NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>**)

# *The Reduction of Nitrogen*

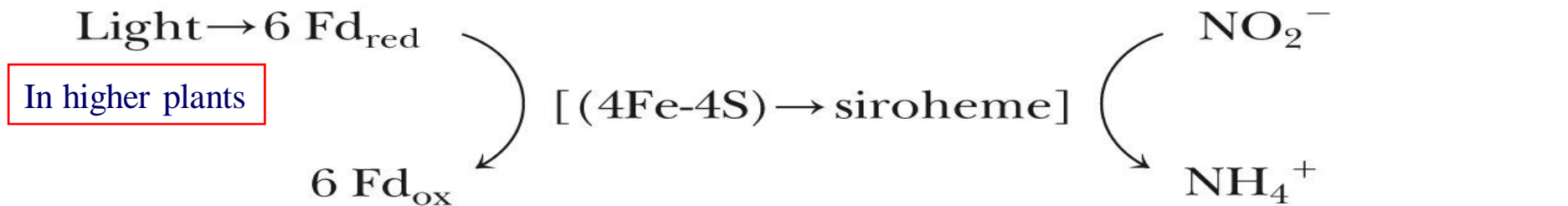
## *Nitrogen assimilation and nitrogen fixation*

- 1. Nitrate assimilation** occurs in two steps:
  - $2e^-$  reduction of **nitrate** to **nitrite**
  - $6e^-$  reduction of **nitrite** to **ammonium**
  - Nitrate assimilation accounts for 99% of N acquisition by the biosphere
- 2. Nitrogen fixation** involves reduction of  $N_2$  in prokaryotes by nitrogenase



# *Nitrite Reductase*

- In higher plants, **nitrite** reductase is in **chloroplasts**, but **nitrate** reductase is **cytosolic**



# *Nitrate Assimilation*

- **Nitrate assimilation**

- the reduction of nitrate to  $\text{NH}_4^+$  in plants, various fungi, and certain bacteria

- Two steps:

1. **Nitrate reductase**



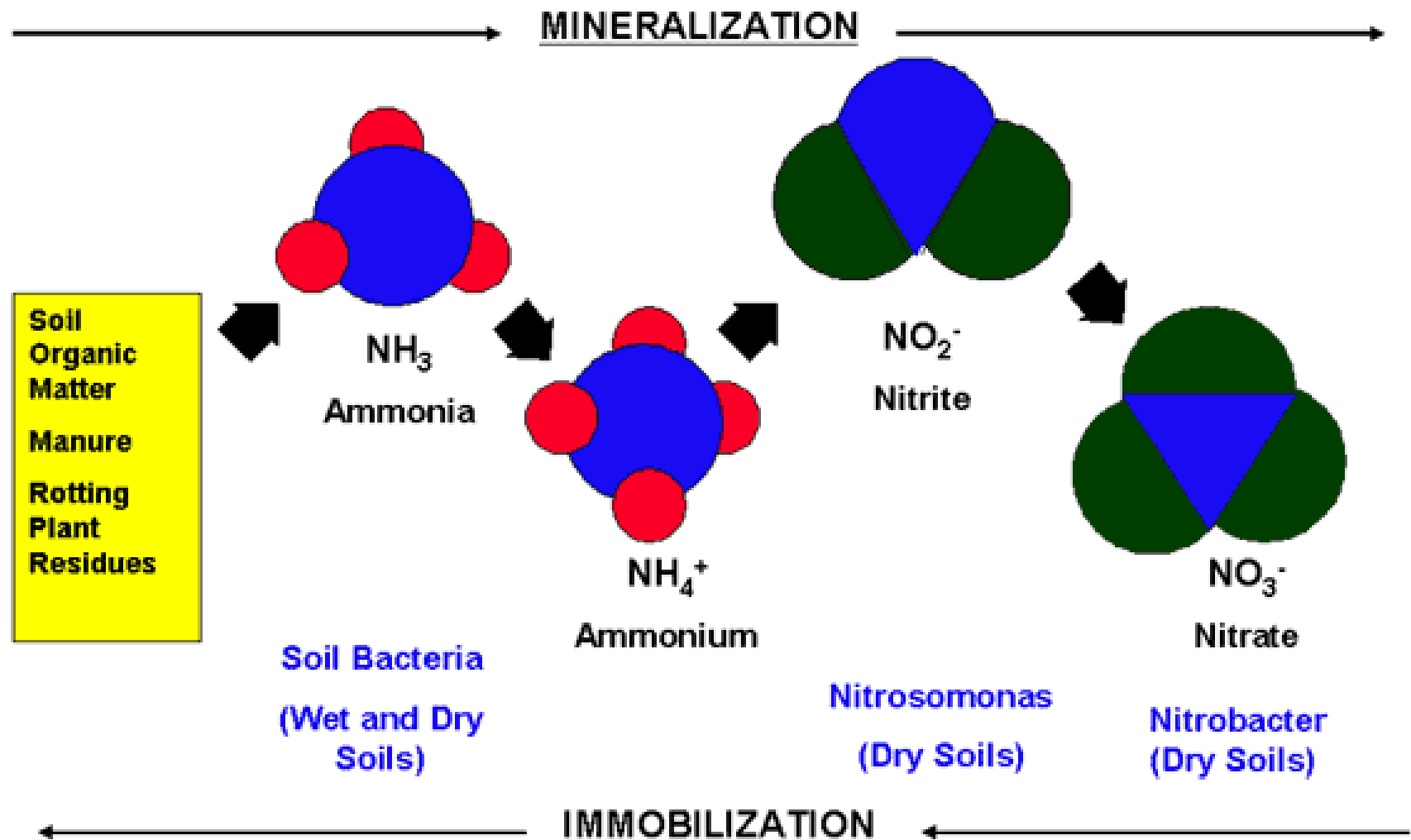
2. **Nitrite reductase**



- Electrons are transferred from NADH to nitrate

# Mineralization and Immobilization

Created by J. Strock  
University of Minnesota



# Symbiotic Nitrogen Fixation

## The *Rhizobium*-legume association

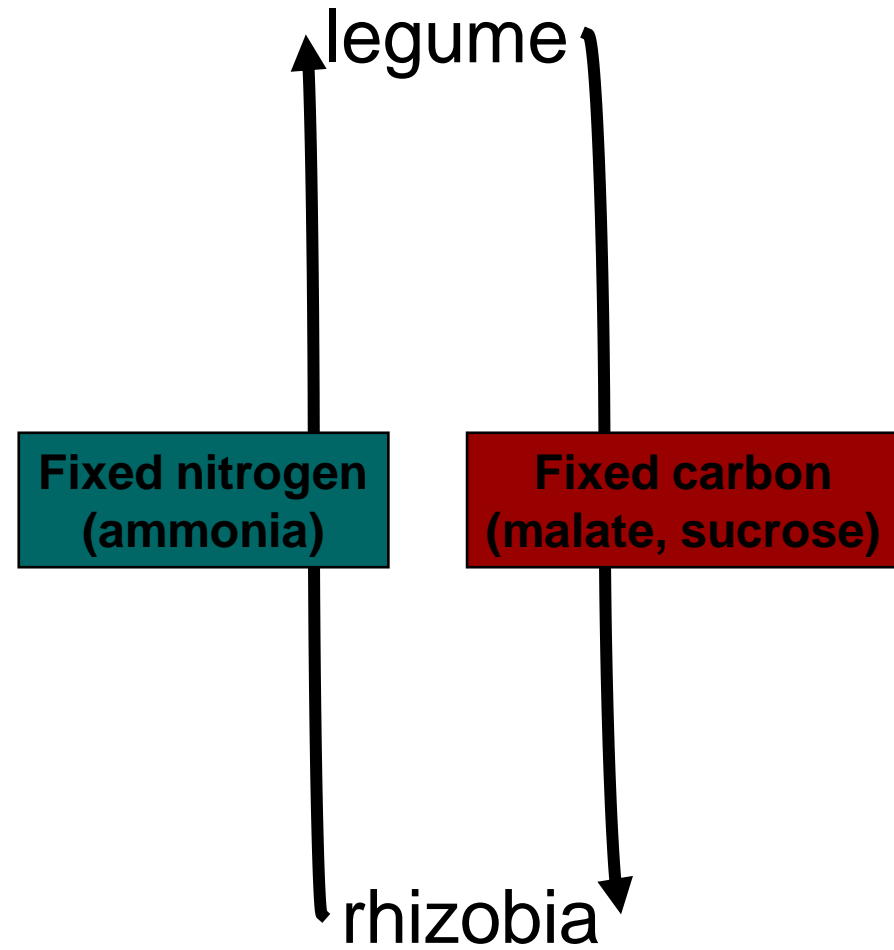
Bacterial associations with certain plant families, primarily **legume** species, make the largest single contribution to biological nitrogen fixation in the biosphere



# *Nitrogen fixation*



- *Only occurs in certain prokaryotes*
  - *Rhizobia* fix nitrogen in **symbiotic** association with leguminous plants
  - *Rhizobia* fix N for the plant and plant provides *Rhizobia* with carbon substrates
- Fundamental requirements:
  1. Nitrogenase
  2. A strong reductant (reduced ferredoxin)
  3. ATP
  4. **O-free** conditions



## Nod D (the sensor)

the **nod D** gene product recognizes molecules (phenylpropanoid-derived **flavonoids**) produced by plant roots and becomes activated as a result of that binding

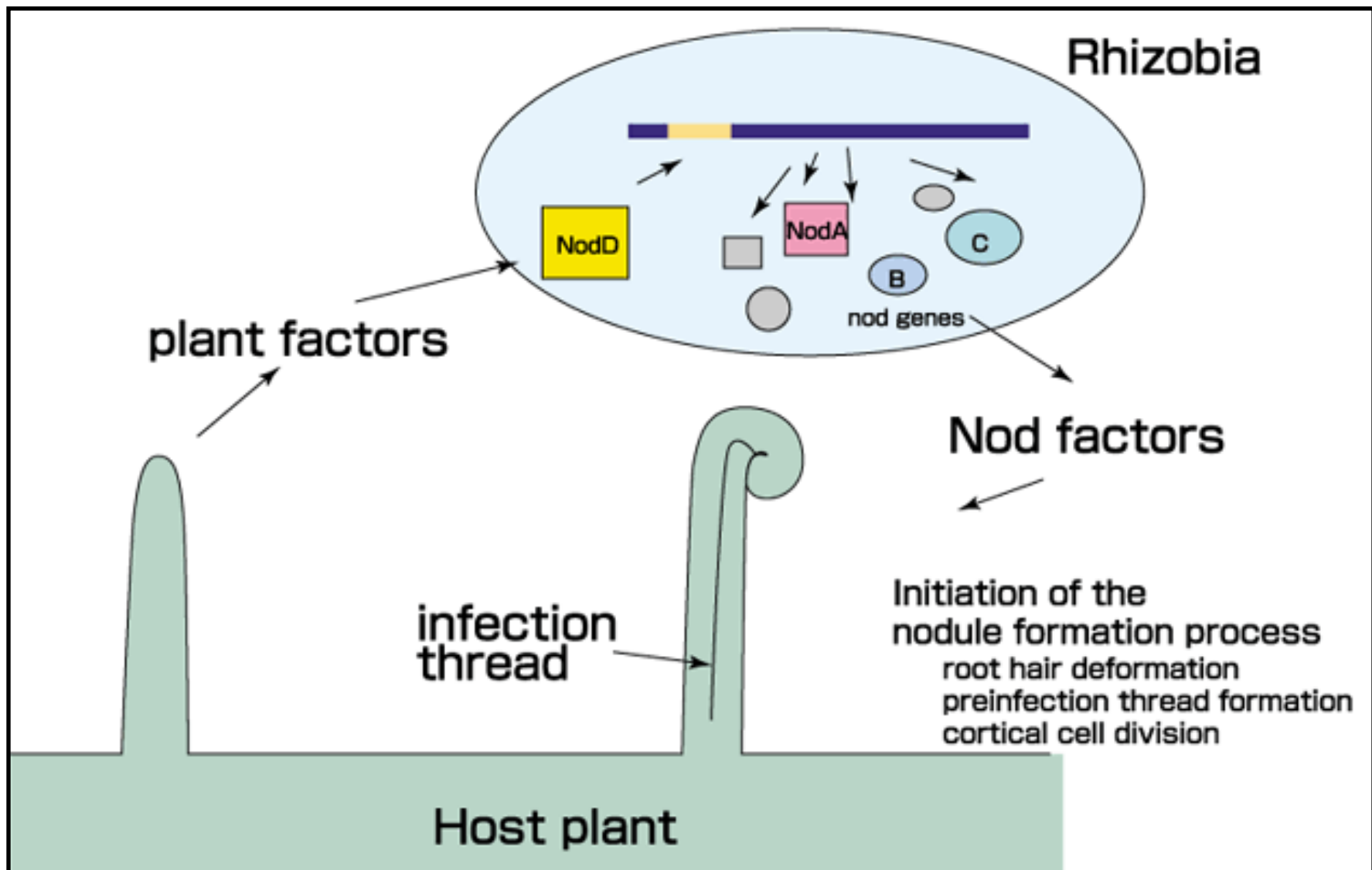
**activated nodD protein positively** controls the expression of the other genes in the nod gene "regulon" (signal transduction)

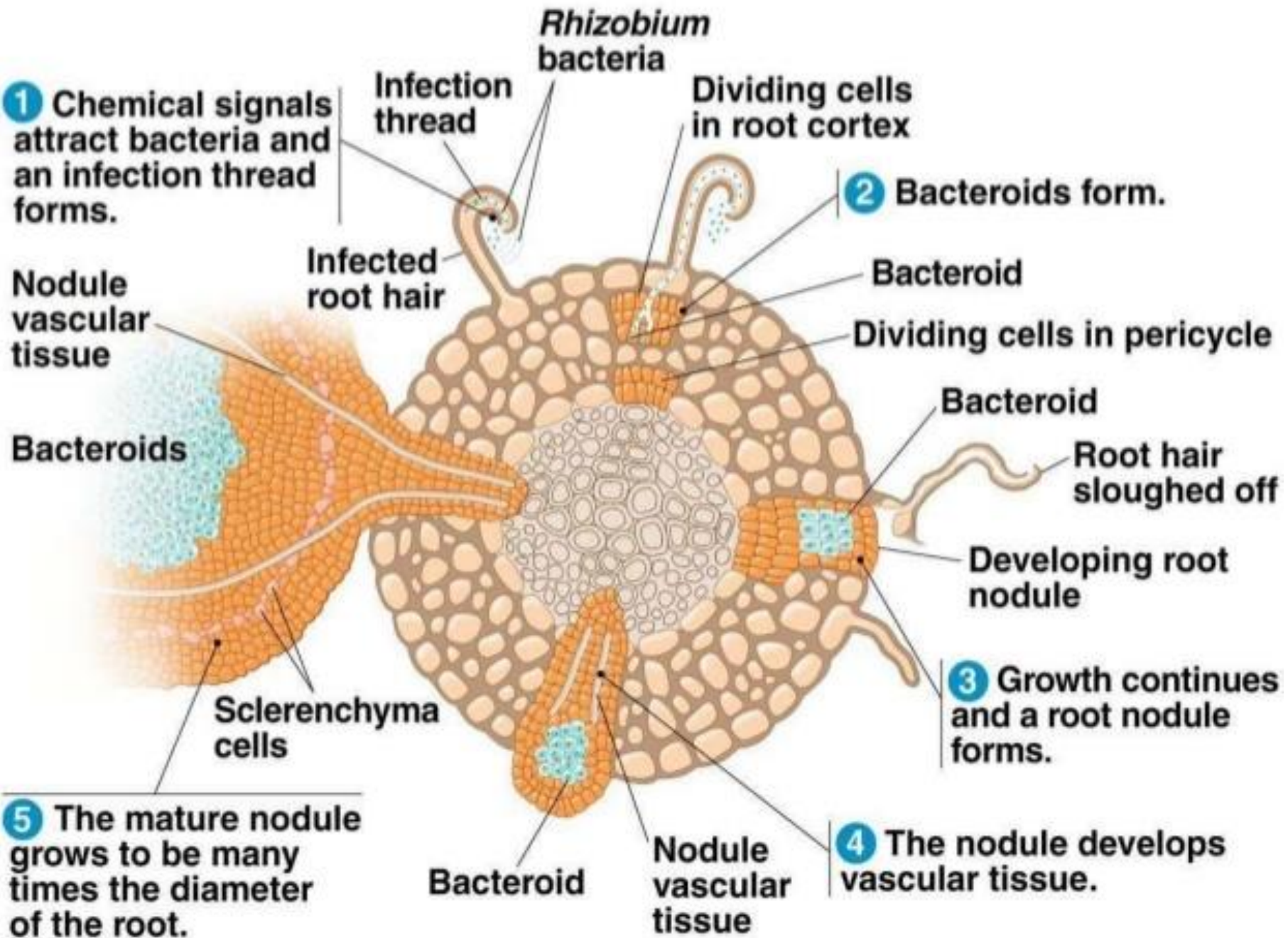
**different nodD** alleles recognize **various flavonoid** structures with different affinities, and respond with differential patterns of nod gene activation

Biological nitrogen fixation is the reduction of atmospheric nitrogen gas ( $N_2$ ) to ammonium ions ( $NH_4^+$ ) by the oxygen-sensitive enzyme, **nitrogenase**.

Plant genomes lack any genes encoding this enzyme, which occurs only in prokaryotes (bacteria).







# Nitrogen fixing genes

- **Bacterial genes**

- 17 *nif* genes

- Structural genes coding for nitrogenase

- *nif D* & *K* –2 subunits of MoFe protein

- *F* & *H* ferredoxin & Fe protein)

- Regulating genes

- *Nod* genes on *sym* plasmid

- *Fix* genes

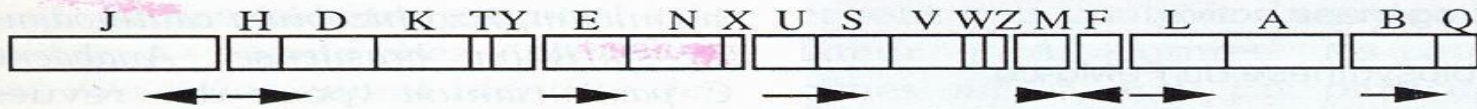
- **Host genes**

- *NOD* genes

# Genetic Clusters

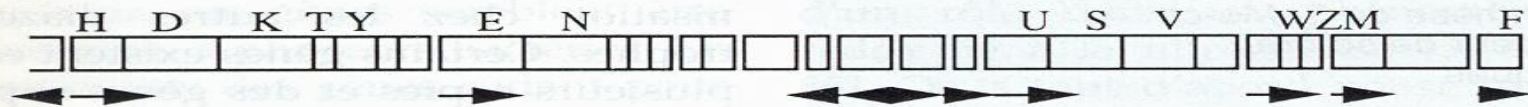
## *Klebsiella pneumoniae*

### Gènes *nif*

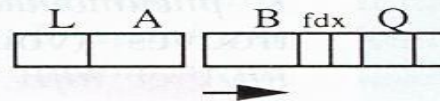


## *Azotobacter vinelandii*

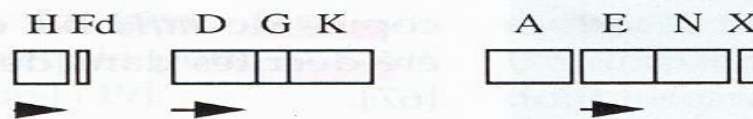
### Gènes *nif*, région 1



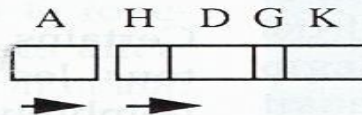
### Gènes *nif*, région 2



### Gènes *vnf*



### Gènes *anf*



### Gènes *fix*

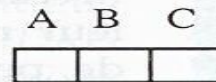
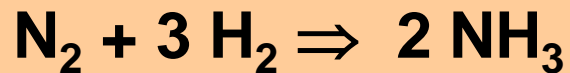


Fig 2. Organisation des gènes de la fixation de l'azote de *Klebsiella pneumoniae* et d'*Azotobacter vinelandii*. Les gènes contigus correspondent à des opérons polycistroniques. Les flèches indiquent le sens de transcription à partir de promoteurs dépendant du facteur  $\sigma^{54}$ .

The enzyme **nitrogenase** catalyses the conversion of atmospheric, gaseous dinitrogen (N<sub>2</sub>) and dihydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>) to ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>), as shown in the chemical equation below:



The incredibly strong (triple) bond in N<sub>2</sub> makes this reaction very difficult to carry out efficiently. In fact, nitrogenase consumes ~16 moles of ATP for every molecule of N<sub>2</sub> it reduces to NH<sub>3</sub>, which makes it one of the most energy-expensive processes known in Nature.

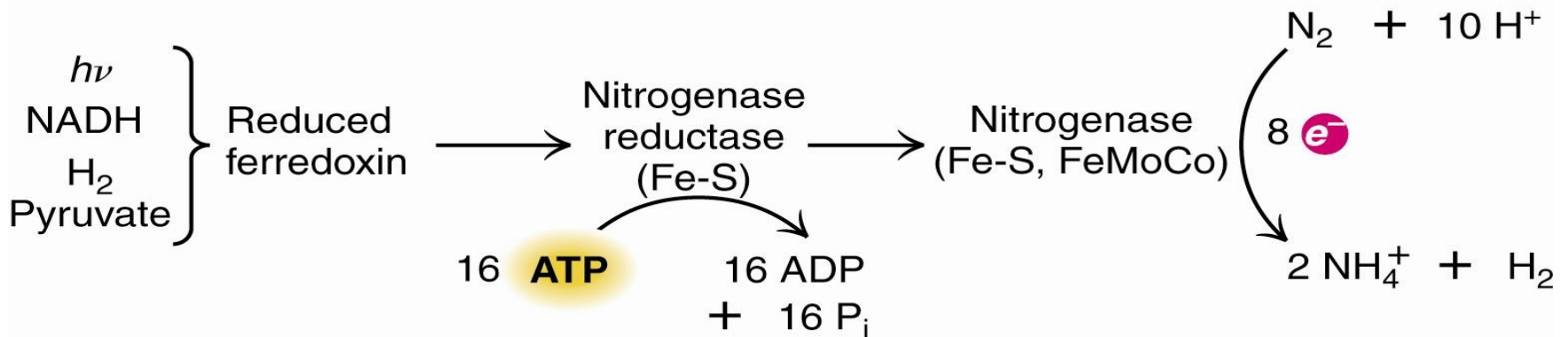
# Stages of Nitrogen fixation

- Activation of dinitrogen  $\text{N}_2 \rightarrow \text{N} + \text{N}$
- Activation of hydrogen  $\text{H}_2 \rightarrow 2\text{H}^+ + 2\text{e}^-$
- Reduction of dinitrogen to ammonia
- $2\text{N} + 6\text{H}^+ + 6\text{e}^- \rightarrow 2\text{NH}_3$
- Catalysed by **NITROGENASE**

# Nitrogenase Complex

Two metalloprotein components:

1. Nitrogenase reductase
2. Nitrogenase

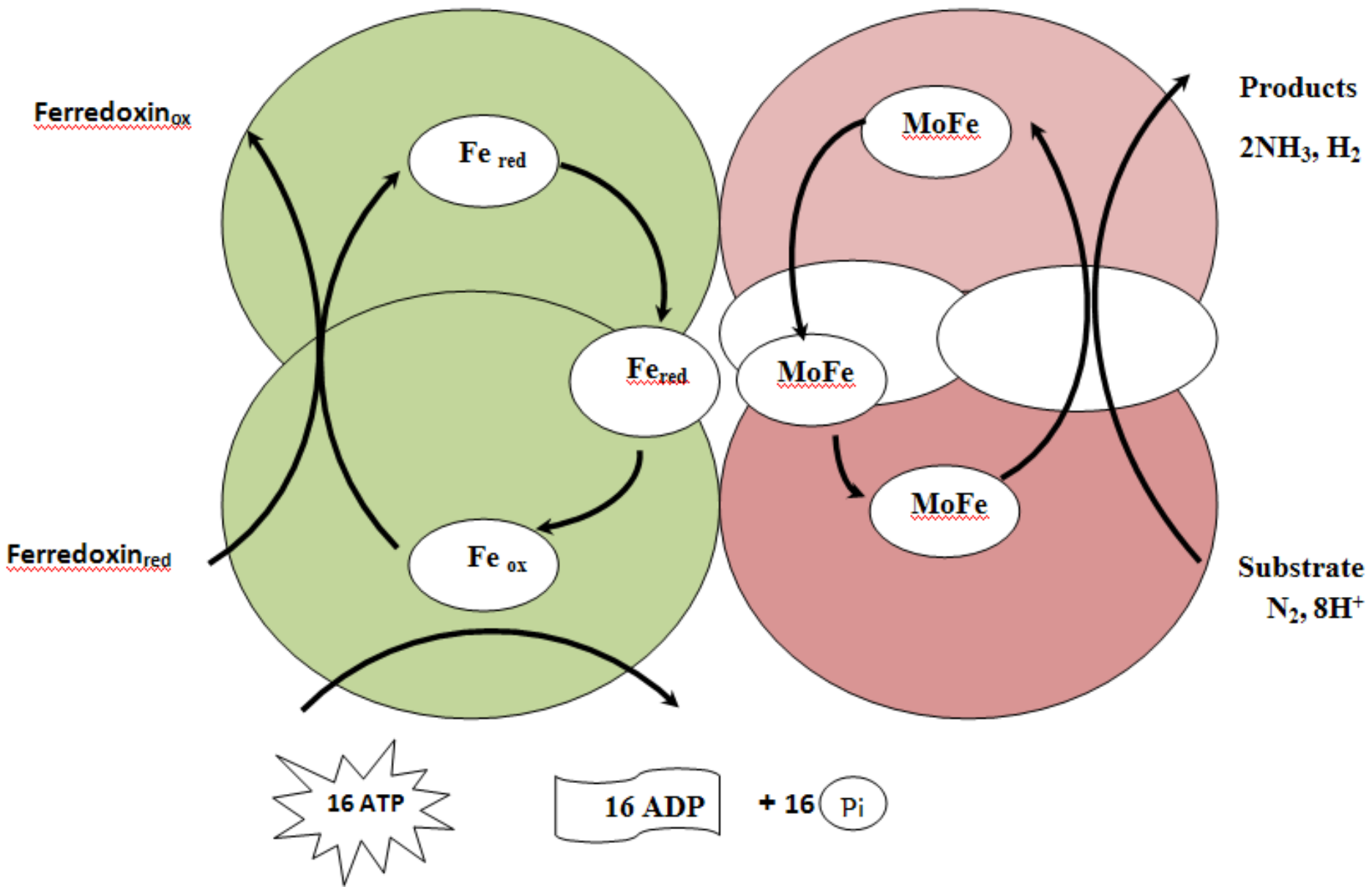


# Nitrogenase Complex

*Two protein components: nitrogenase reductase and nitrogenase*

- Nitrogenase reductase is a 60 kD homodimer with a single 4Fe-4S cluster
- Very oxygen-sensitive
- Binds MgATP
- 4ATP required per pair of electrons transferred
- Reduction of  $\text{N}_2$  to  $2\text{NH}_3 + \text{H}_2$  requires 4 pairs of electrons, so **16 ATP are consumed per  $\text{N}_2$**





# *Nitrogenase reductase*

- Nitrogenase reductase
  - Fe-protein
  - A 60 kD homodimer with a single 4Fe-4S cluster
- Extremely O<sub>2</sub>-sensitive
- Binds MgATP and hydrolyzes 2 ATPs per electron transferred
- Because reduction of N<sub>2</sub> to 2NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> + H<sub>2</sub> requires 8 electrons, 16 ATP are consumed per N<sub>2</sub> reduced

# *Nitrogenase*

- MoFe-protein—a 220 kD  $\alpha_2\beta_2$  heterotetramer
- An  $\alpha\beta$ -dimer serve as the functional unit
  - Contains two types of metal centers
    1. P-cluster (figure 25.5a)  
8Fe-7S center
    2. FeMo-cofactor (figure 25.5b)  
7Fe-1-Mo-9S cluster
- Oxygen labile
- Nitrogenase is a rather slow enzyme
  - 12  $e^-$  pairs per second, i.e., only three molecules of  $N_2$  per second
  - As much as 5% of cellular protein may be nitrogenase

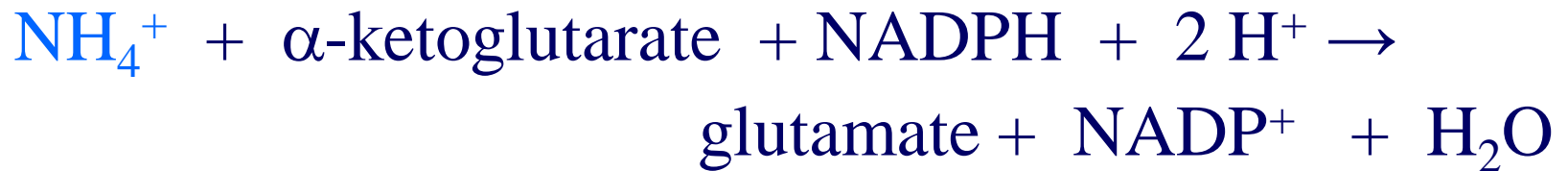
# *The Metabolic Fate of Ammonium*

*$NH_4^+$  enters organic linkage via three major reactions in all cells*

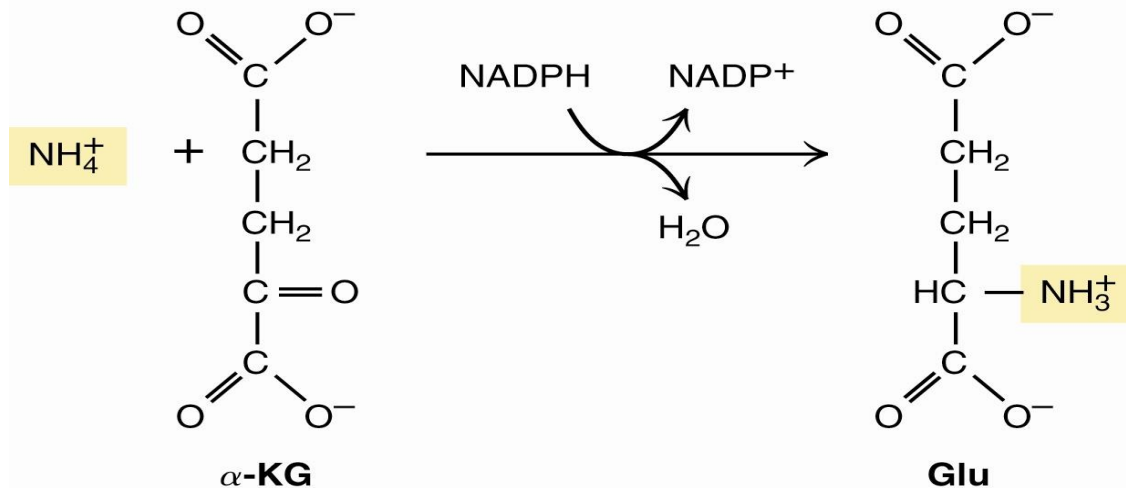
1. Glutamate dehydrogenase (GDH)
  2. Glutamine synthetase (GS)
  3. Carbamoyl-phosphate synthetase I (CPS-I)
- Asparagine synthetase (some microorganisms)

# 1. Glutamate dehydrogenase (GDH)

- Reductive amination of  $\alpha$ -ketoglutarate to form glutamate



- Mammalian GDH plays a prominent role in amino acid catabolism (oxidative amination)



## 2. *Glutamine synthetase (GS)*

- ATP-dependent **amidation of  $\gamma$ -carboxyl of glutamate** to glutamine

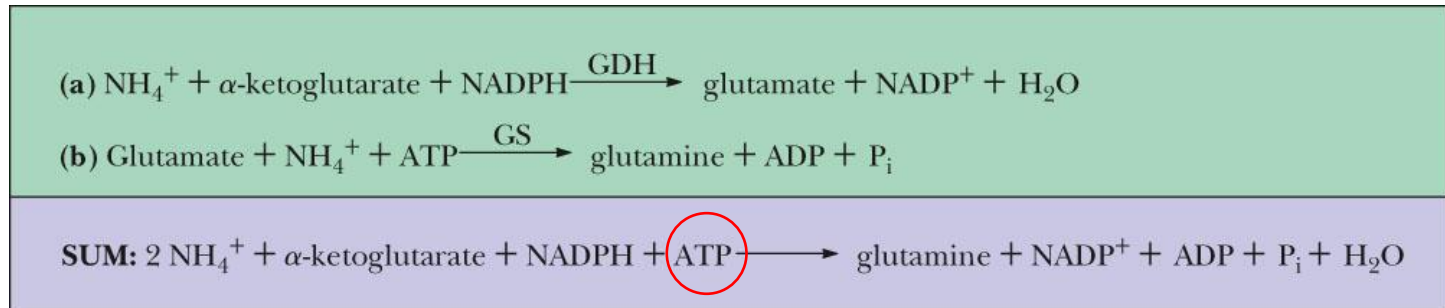


- Glutamine is a major **N donor** in the biosynthesis of many organic N compounds, therefore GS activity is tightly regulated
- Glutamine is the most abundant amino acid in human

# *The major pathways of Ammonium Assimilation lead to glutamin synthesis*

*Two principal pathways :*

1. Principal route: **GDH/GS** in organisms **rich in N**



2. Secondary route: **GS/GOGAT** in organisms confronting **N limitation**

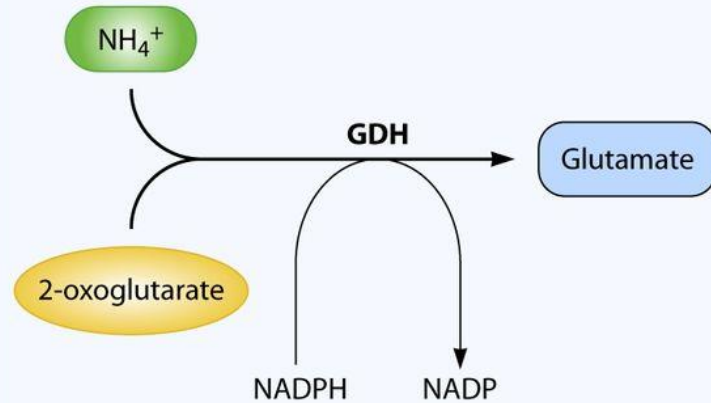
- GOGAT is **glutamate synthase** or **glutamate:oxo-glutarate amino transferase**
- GDH has a higher  $K_m$  for  $\text{NH}_4^+$  than does GS

# GS GOGAT

- **GS**
- $\text{NH}_4 + \text{glutamate} + \text{ATP} \rightarrow \text{Glutamine}$
- **GOGAT**
- $\text{Glutamine} + \text{alpha keto glutaric acid} + \text{NADH} \rightarrow 2 \text{ glutamate}$

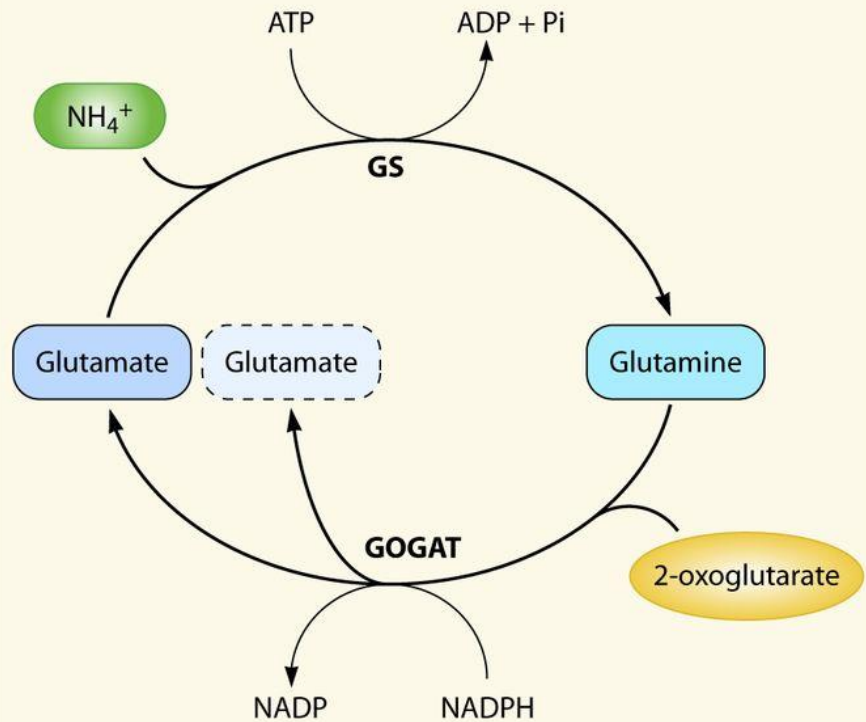


**GDH pathway**  
glutamate dehydrogenase



**One net** glutamate  
**No ATP** consumed  
**Low** affinity for NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> (K<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 mM)

**GS-GOGAT pathway**  
glutamine synthetase-glutamate synthase

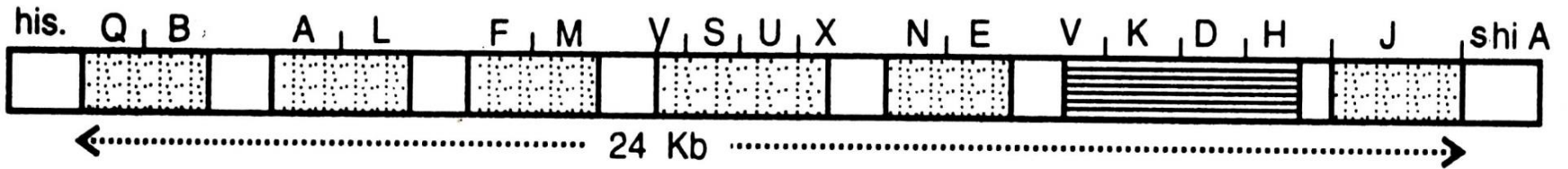


**One net** glutamate  
**One ATP** consumed per NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup>  
**High** affinity for NH<sub>4</sub><sup>+</sup> (K<sub>M</sub> = 0.1 mM)

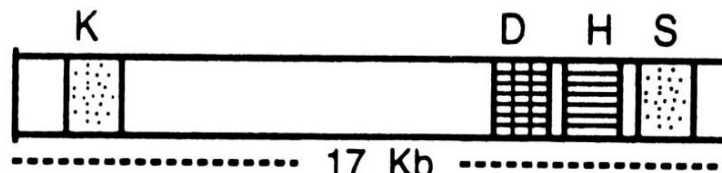
# Export of fixed nitrogen from nodule

- Through xylem transport
- Main product **glutamine** (but exported as such rarely)
- Predominant export product **asparagine** (temperate legumes), **ureides** (tropical legumes)
- Glutamine + aspartate + ATP ----> glutamate + asparagine

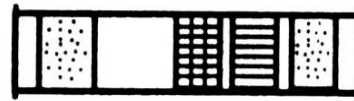
# Nif gene cluster



(A)

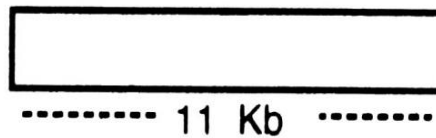


I.



(B)

II.



# NOD GENES

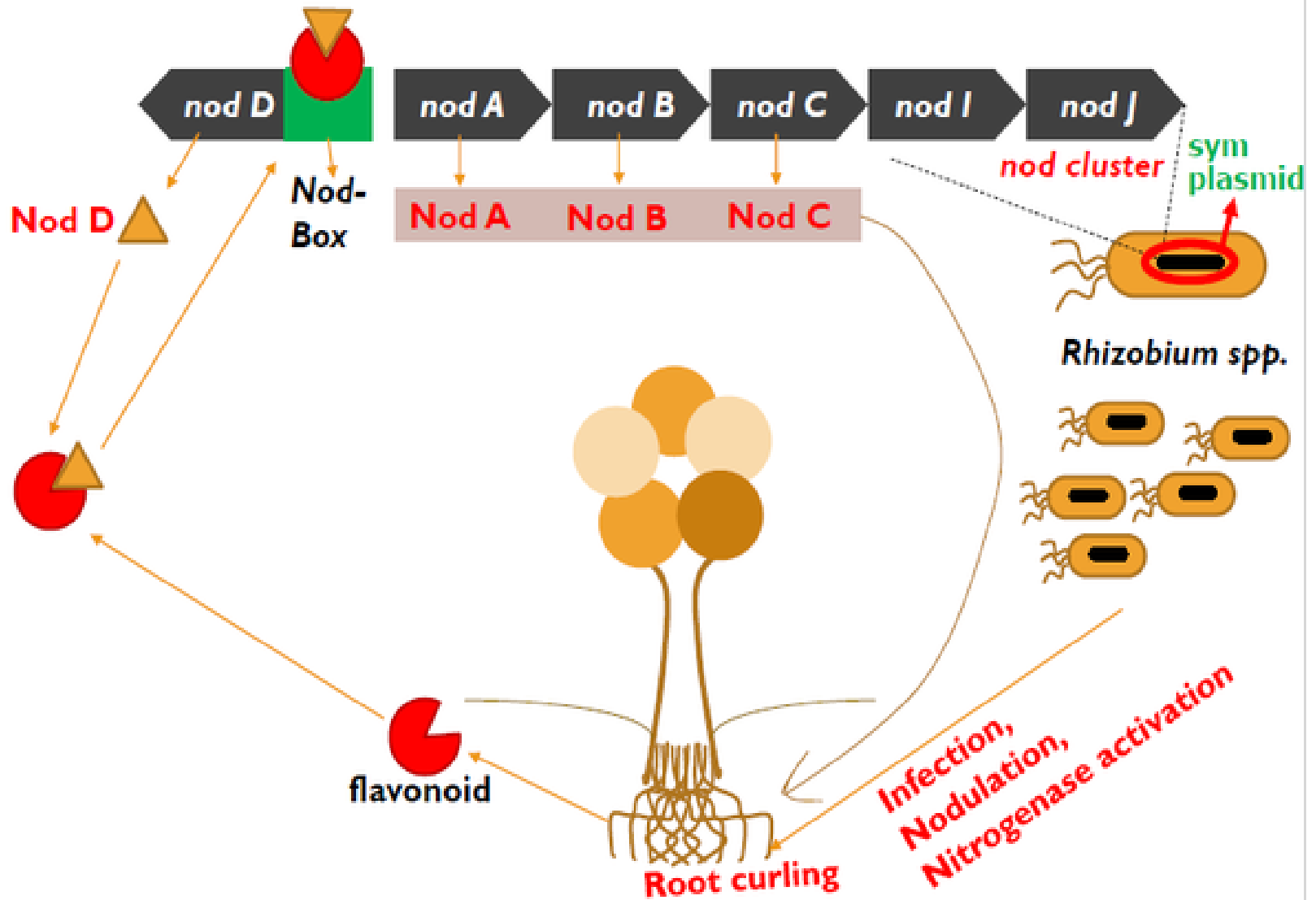
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- Nod genes are present on symplasmid.
- These genes are host specific
- Regulation of nod genes is controlled by Nod D genes.
- The common Nod A,B,C genes are conserved among rhizobium and inactivation of these genes completely depends on root hair infection and nodule formation.

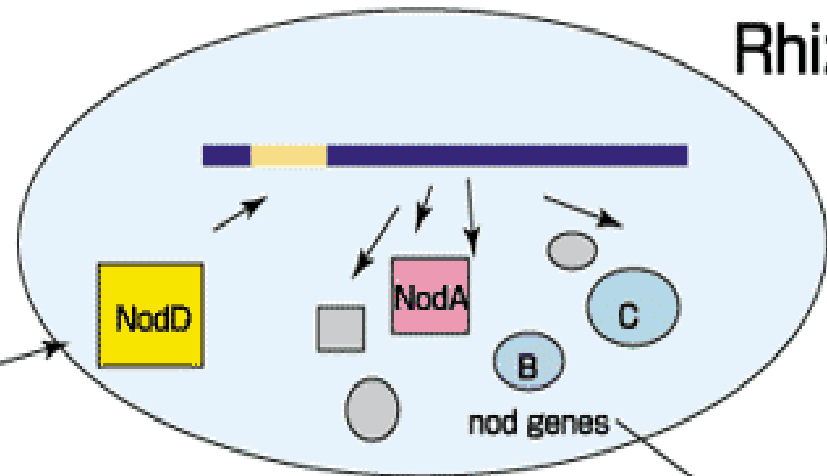
## Nod D (the sensor)

- The nod D gene product recognizes molecules (phenylpropanoid-derived flavonoids) produced by plant roots and becomes activated as a result of that binding.
- activated nodD protein positively controls the expression of the other genes in the nod gene "regulon" (signal transduction)
- different nodD alleles recognize various flavonoid structures with different affinities, and respond with differential patterns of nod gene activation

# NOD GENE CLUSTER FUNCTION



Rhizobia



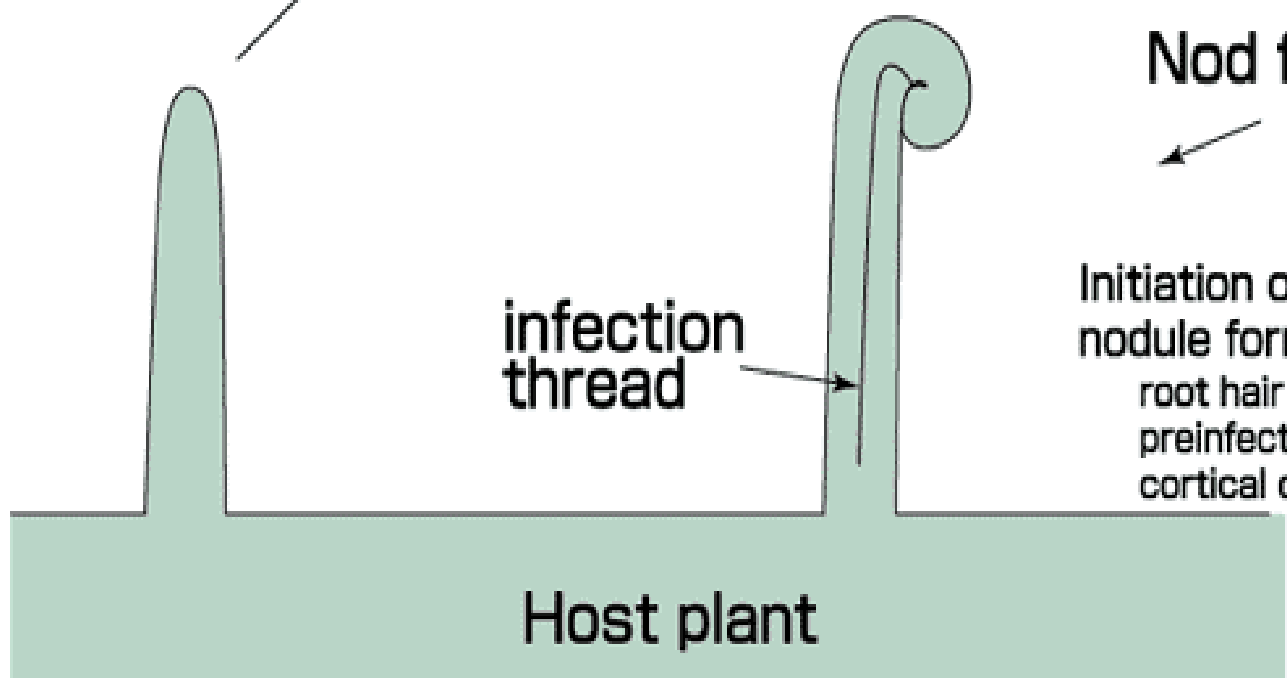
plant factors

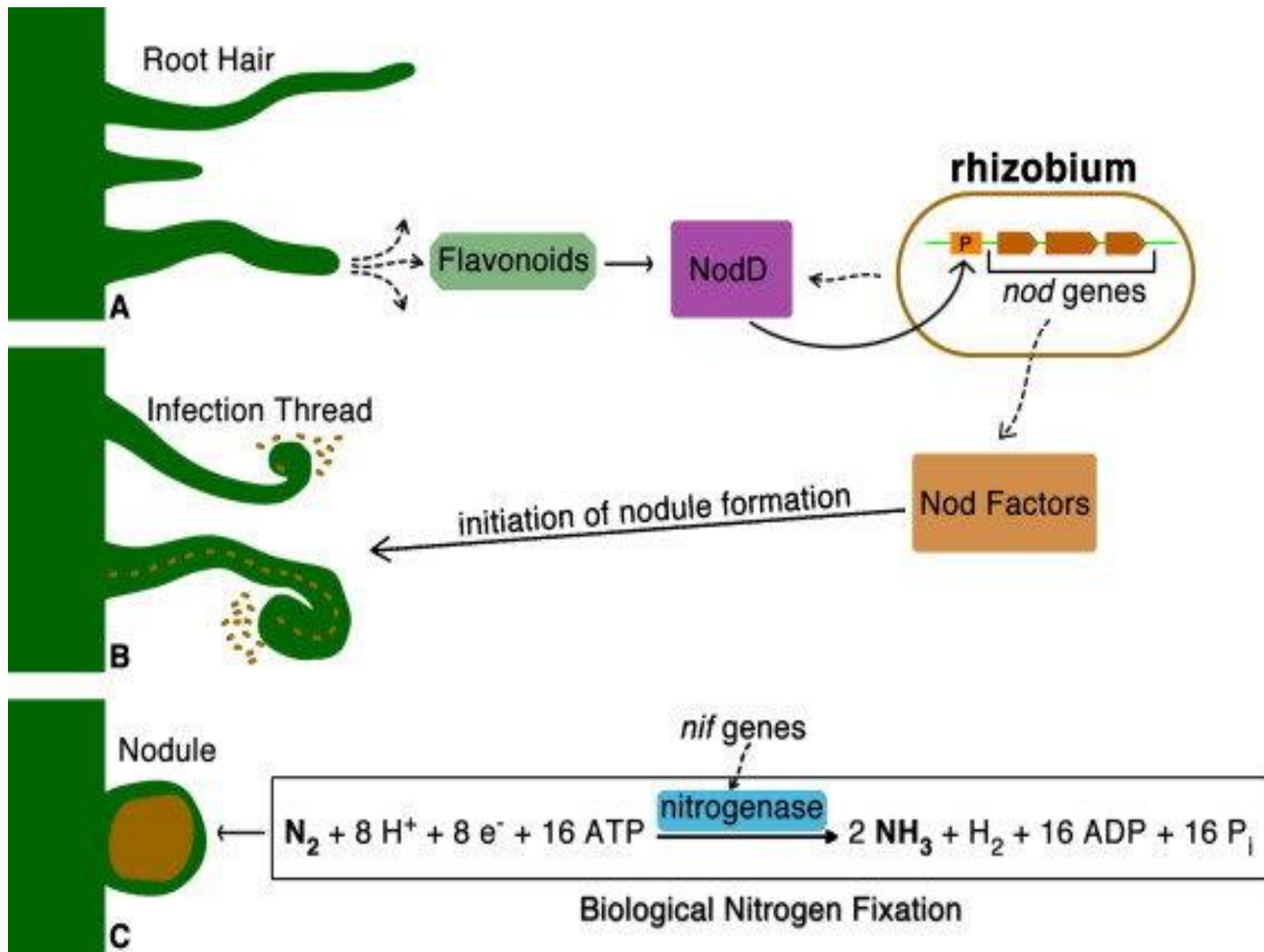
Nod factors

infection thread

Initiation of the nodule formation process  
root hair deformation  
preinfection thread formation  
cortical cell division

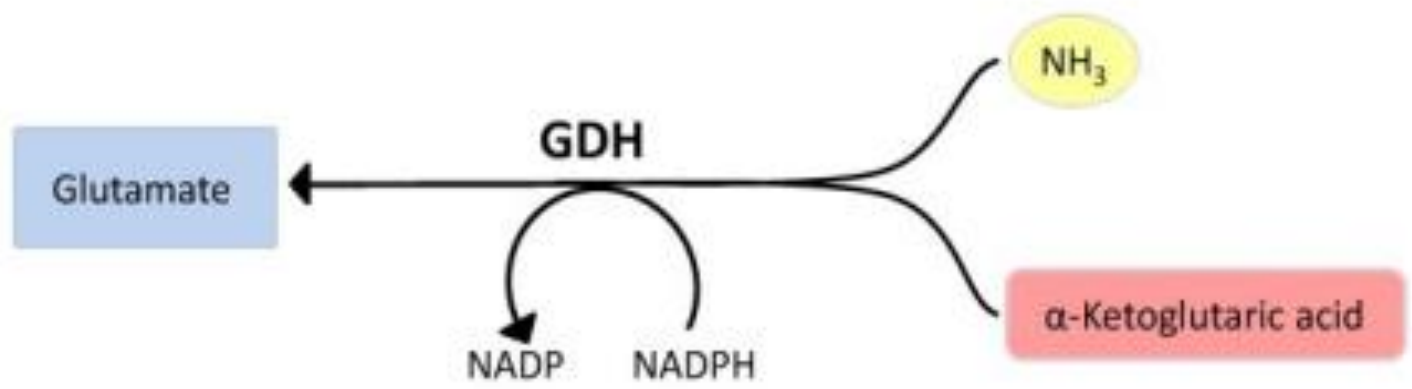
Host plant



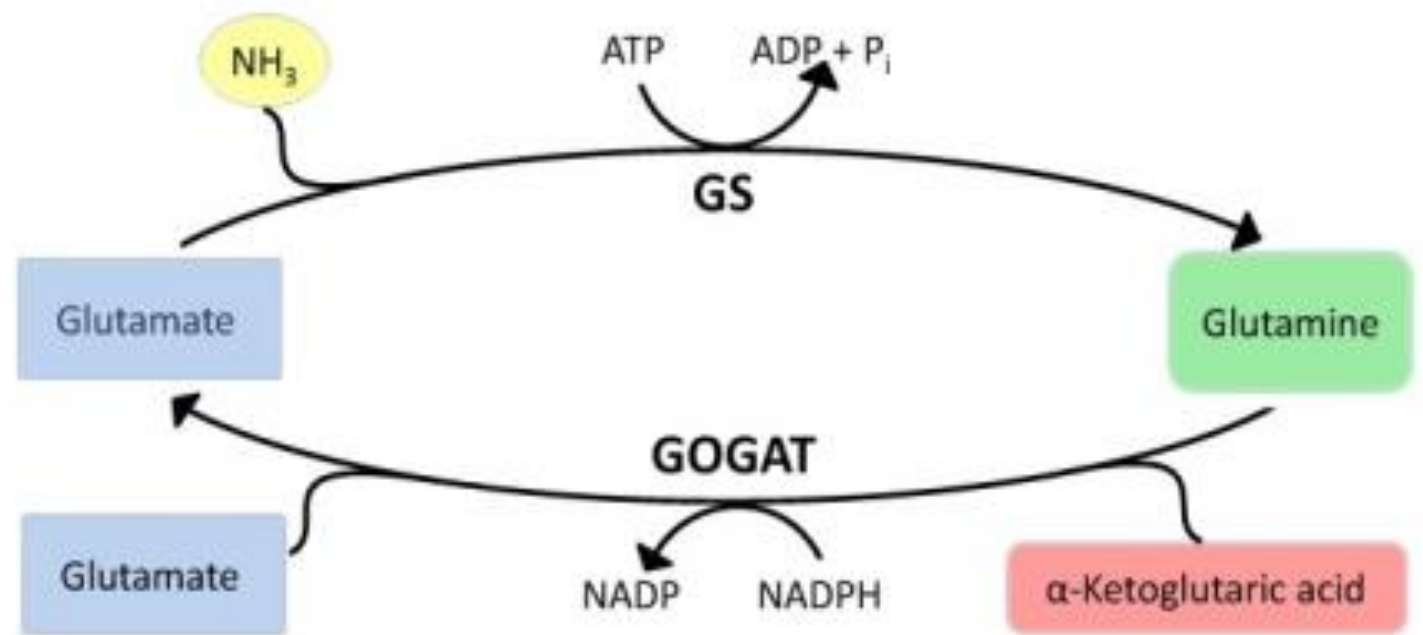


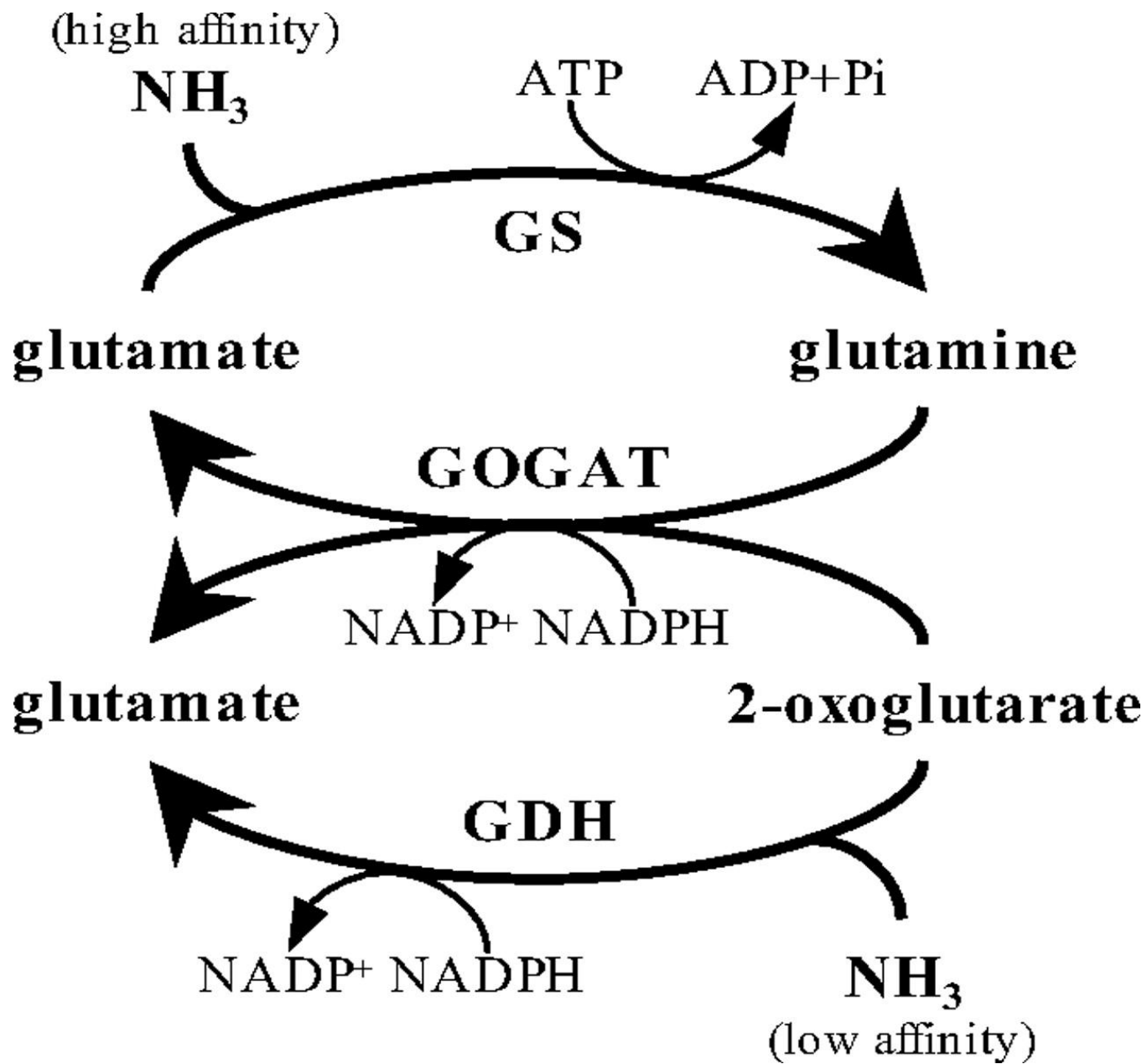


**GDH pathway**



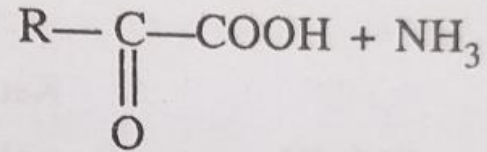
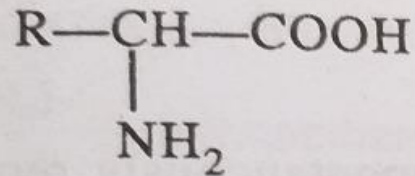
**GS-GOGAT pathway**



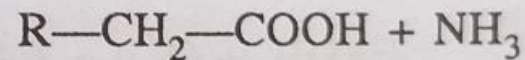
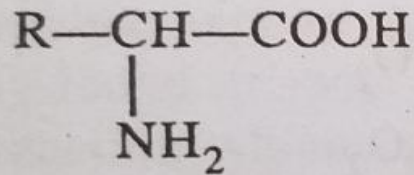


# Deamination

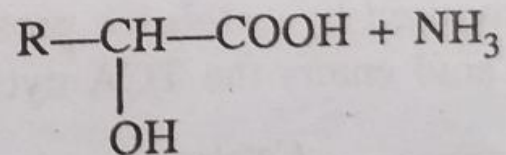
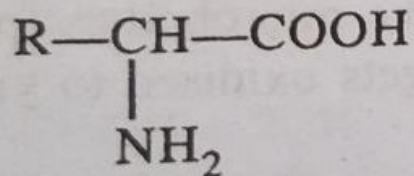
(a) Oxidative deamination



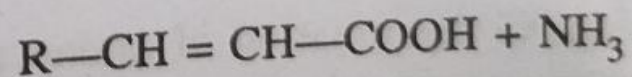
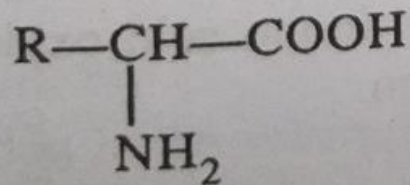
(b) Reductive deamination



(c) Hydrolytic deamination

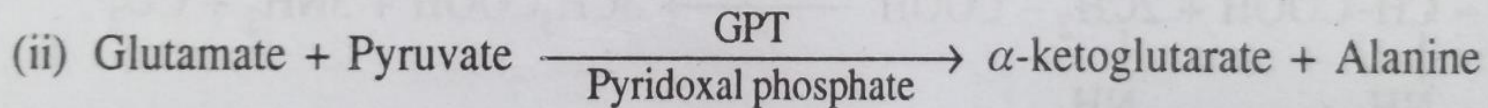
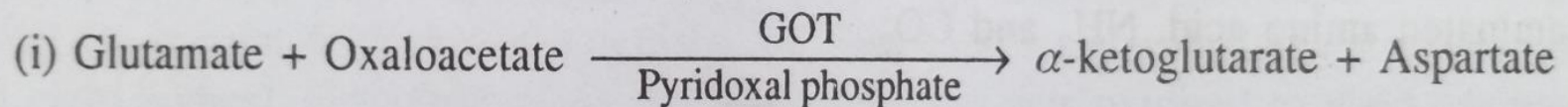


(d) Intramolecular deamination



# Transamination

*Glutamate-oxaloacetate transaminase* (GOT) and *glutamate-pyruvate transaminase* (GPT) are two active transaminases. The transamination reactions they catalyse are given below:

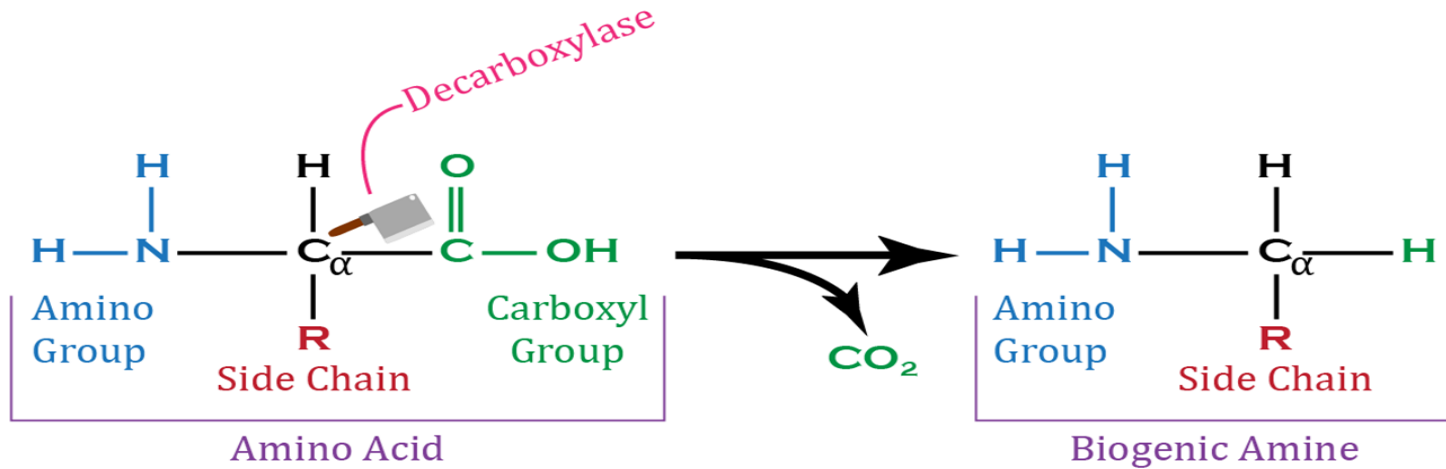


# Conversion of carbon skeleton

Conversion of the carbon framework of amino acids

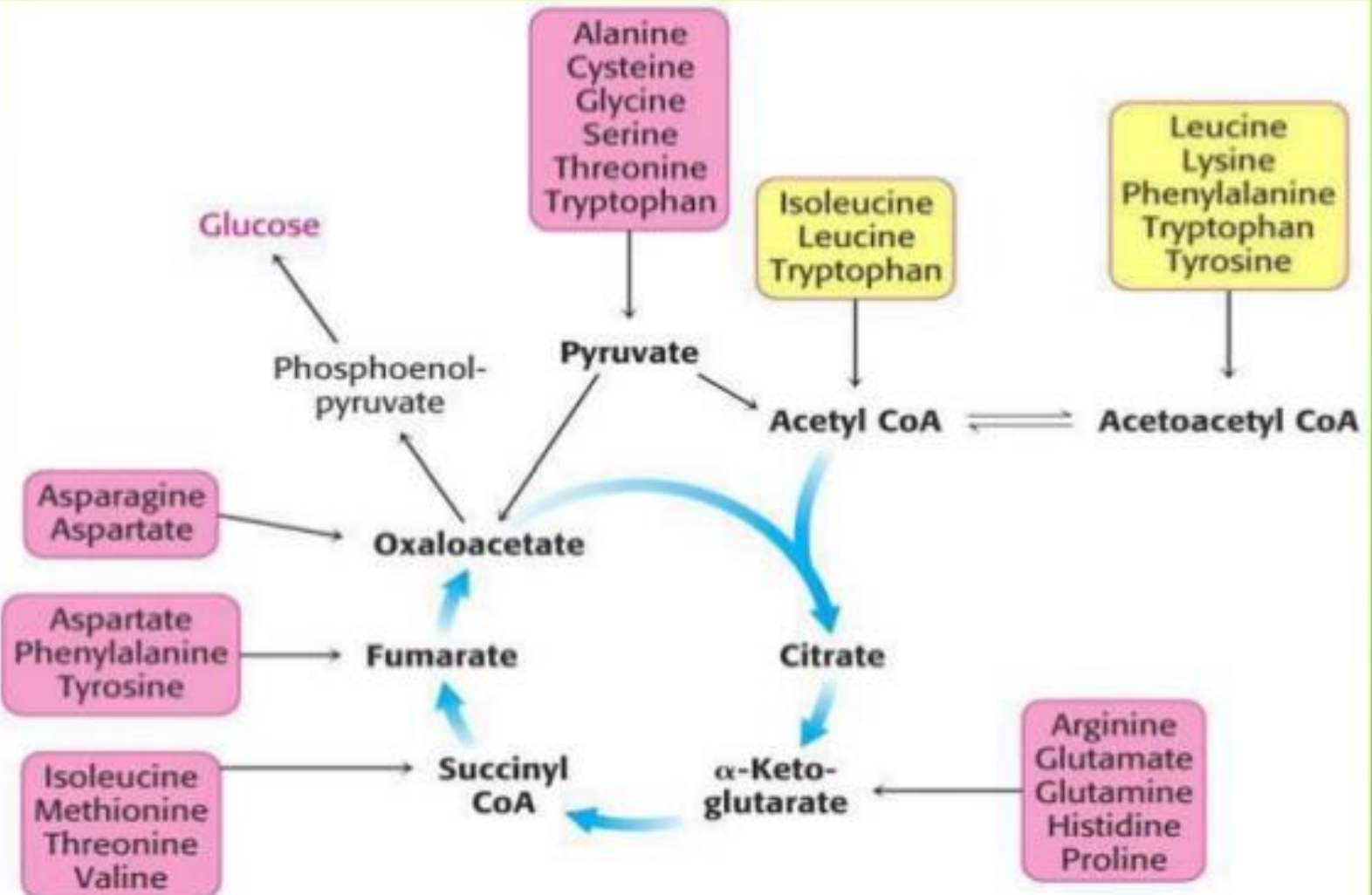
<i>Amino acids</i>	<i>Products</i>
Glycine, alanine, leucine, lysine, cysteine, serine, threonine, tryptophan	Acetyl CoA
Phenylalanine, tyrosine	Acetyl CoA, fumarate
Isoleucine	Acetyl CoA, succinyl CoA
Valine, methionine	Succinyl CoA
Arginine, histidine, glutamine, glutamic acid, proline Asparagine, aspartic acid	$\alpha$ -ketoglutarate Oxaloacetate

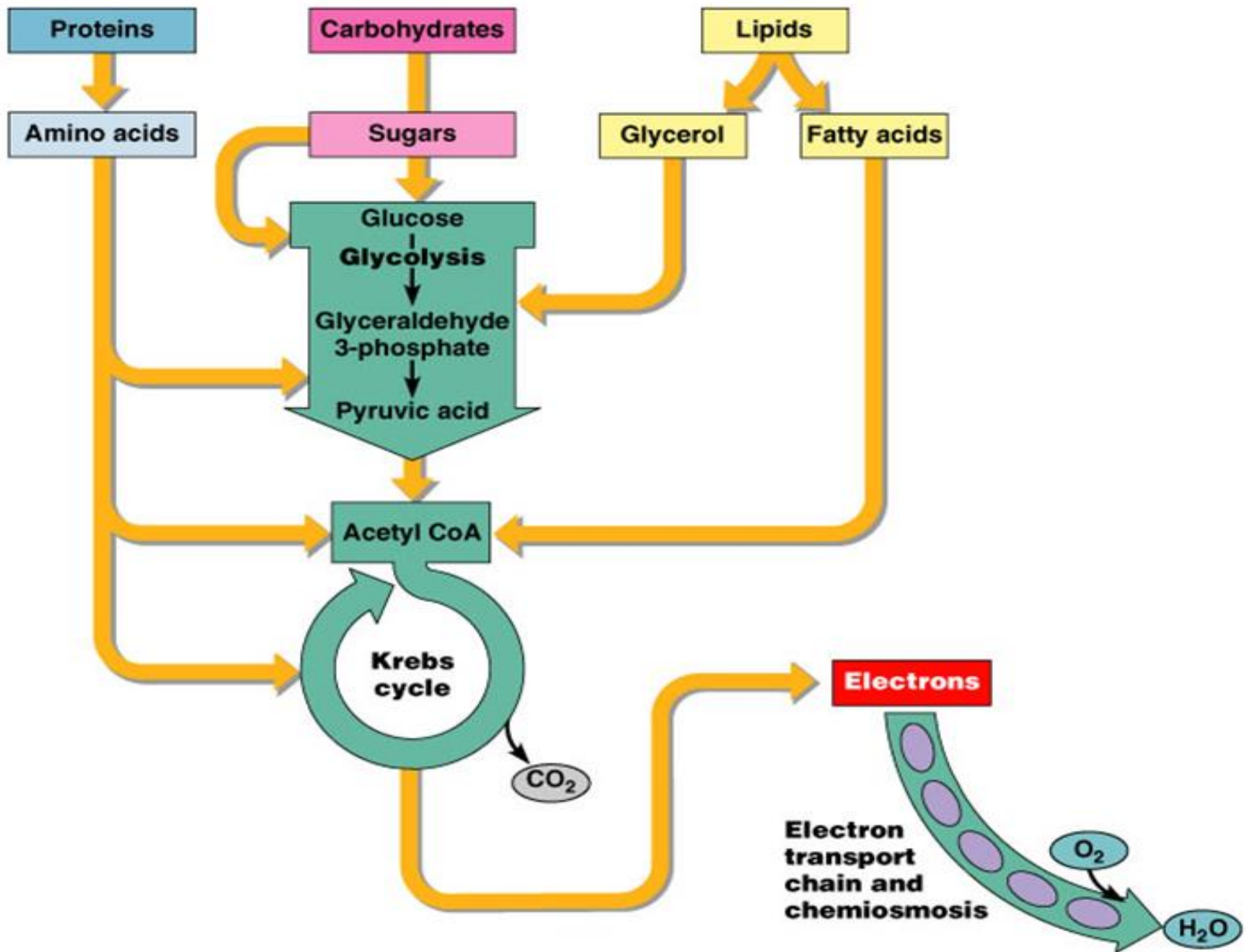
# Biogenic amines



<i>Amino acid</i>	<i>Biogenic amine derived</i>
1. Serine	Ethanolamine
2. Threonine	Propanolamine
3. Cysteine	$\beta$ -mercapto-ethanolamine
4. Aspartic acid	$\beta$ -alanine
5. Glutamic acid	$\gamma$ -amino butyric acid
6. Histidine	Histamine
7. Tyrosine	Tyramine
8. Dihydroxyphenyl alanine	Dopamine
9. Tryptophan	Tryptamine (serotonin, melatonin)

# Amino Acid Degradation



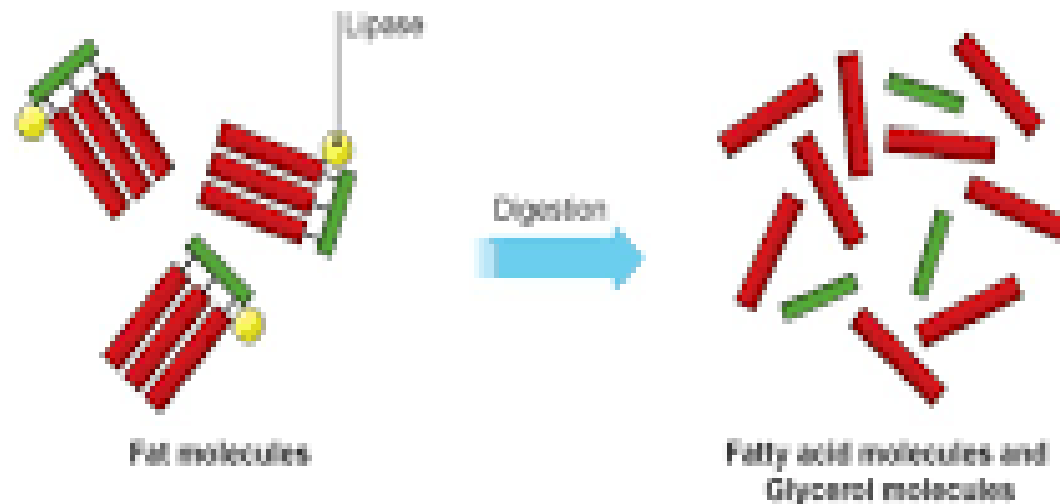




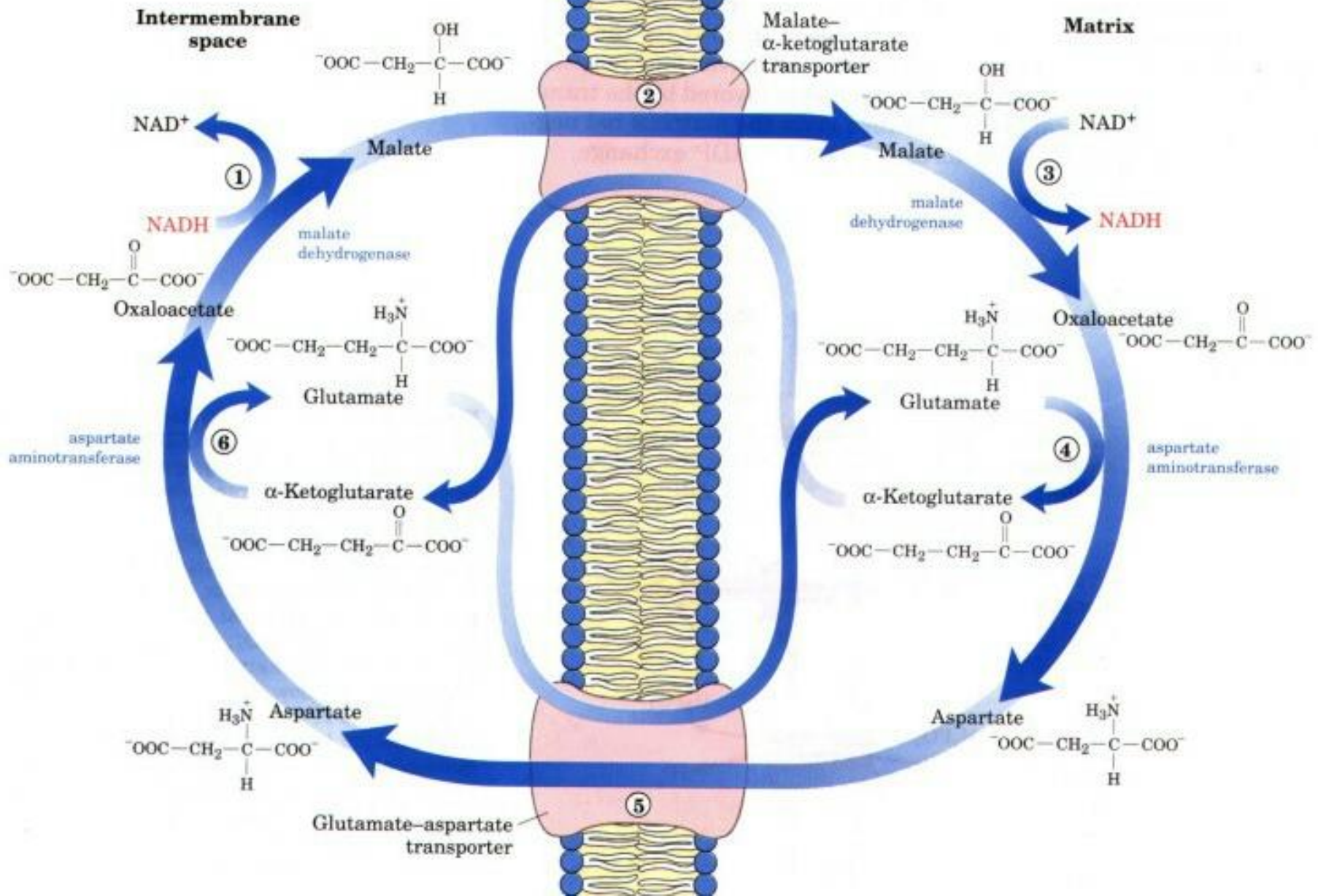
# FAT METABOLISM

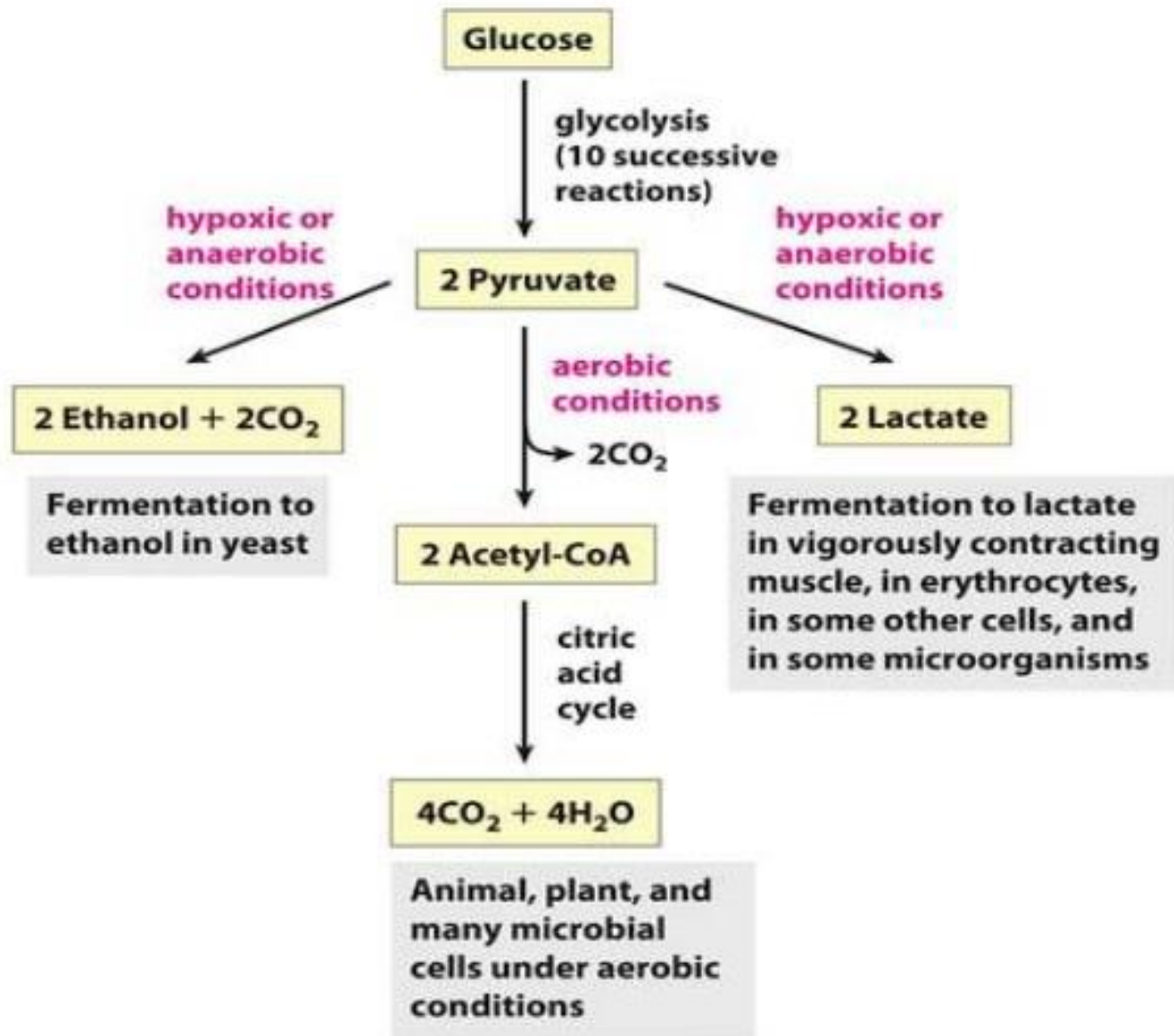
## Fats

- **Lipase** enzymes break down **fats** into **fatty acids** and **glycerol**.



directly into the cytosol. It is first transaminated to form aspartate (4), which can leave via the aspartate-glutamate transporter (5). Oxaloacetate is generated in the cytosol (6), completing the cycle.

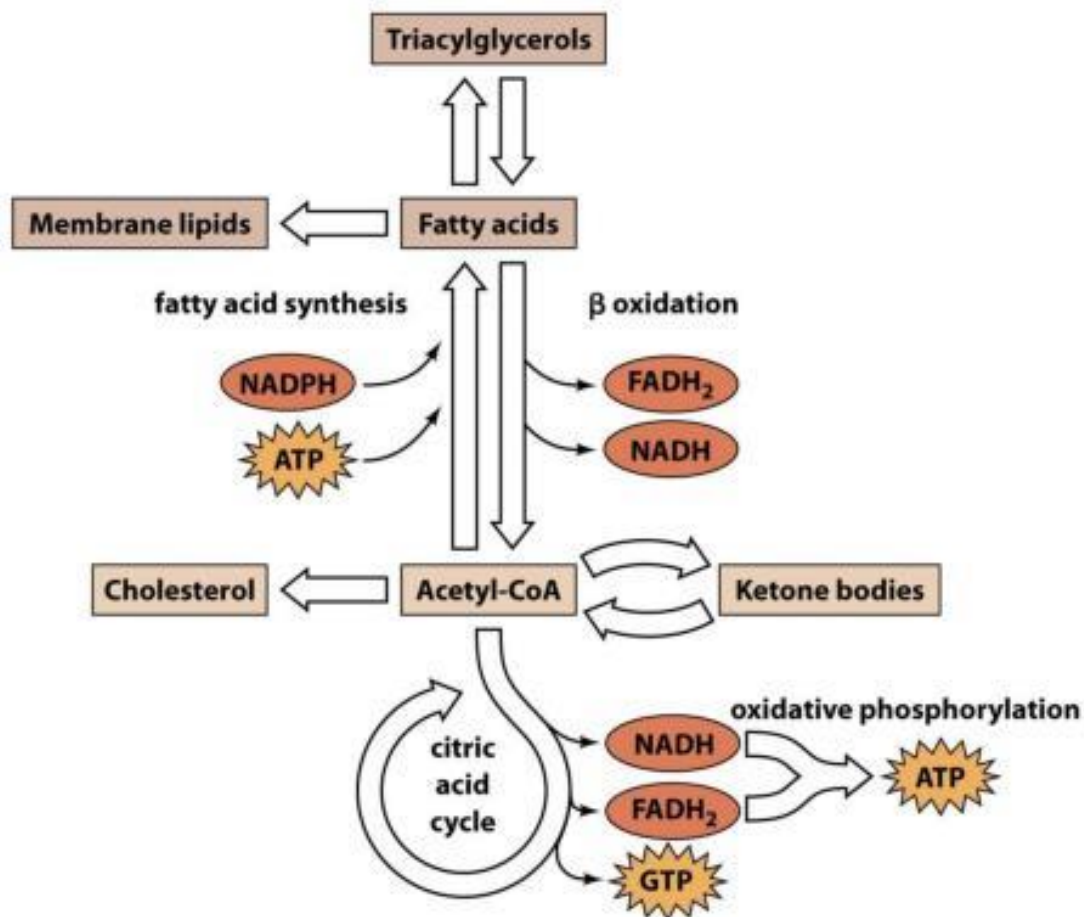


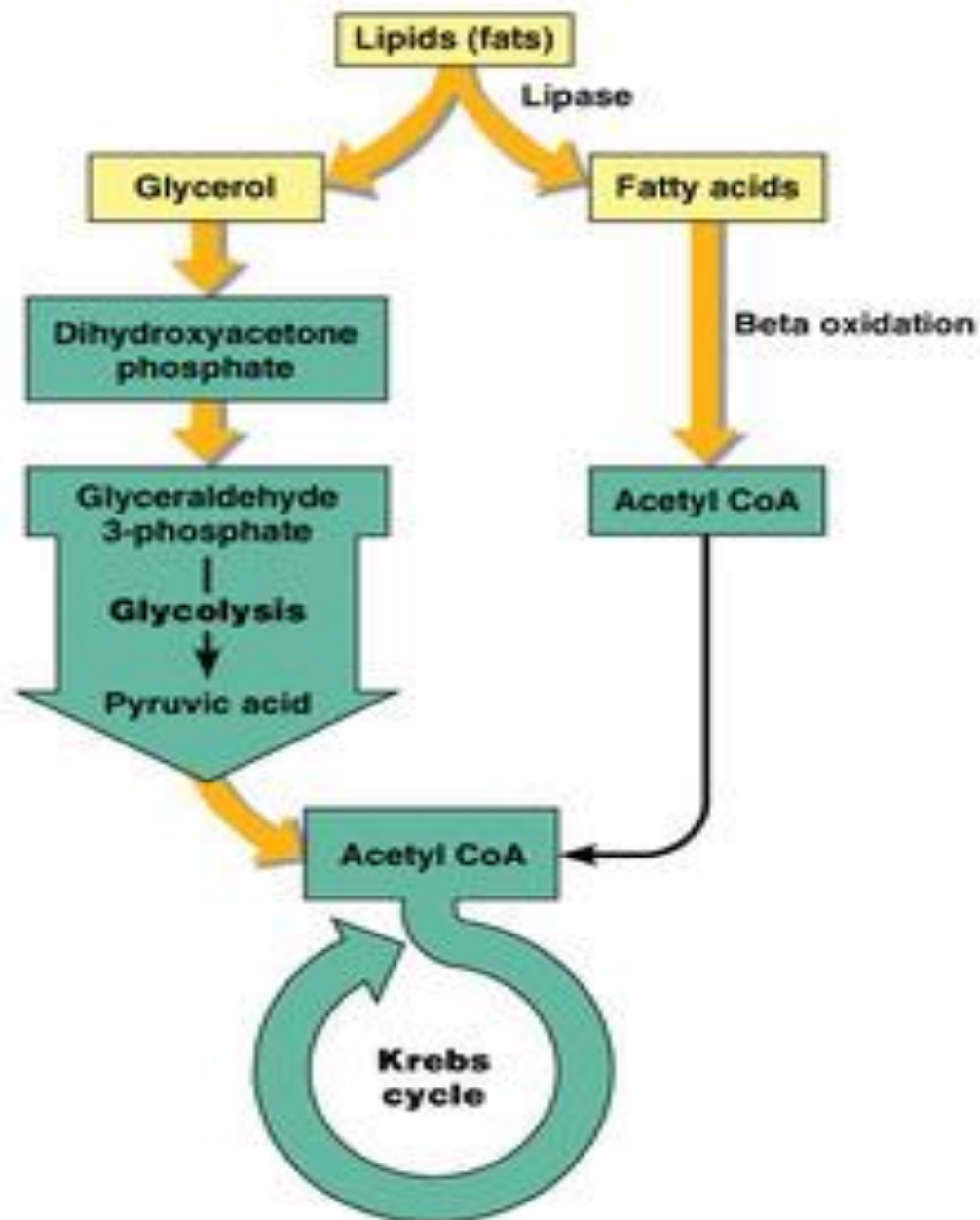


## Diverse Fates of Pyruvate

# Lipids are tied to metabolism through the TCA cycle

The dihydroxyacetone phosphate (DHAP) made by glycolysis or made from oxaloacetate by glyceroneogenesis; thus this system responds to the same hormones involved in regulation of carbohydrate metabolism.





# $\beta$ - Oxidation for odd chain fatty acid

- Beta oxidation for odd chain fatty acid occurs in the same way as for even chain fatty acid except the cleavage step yields *propionyl CoA* and *Acetyl CoA*

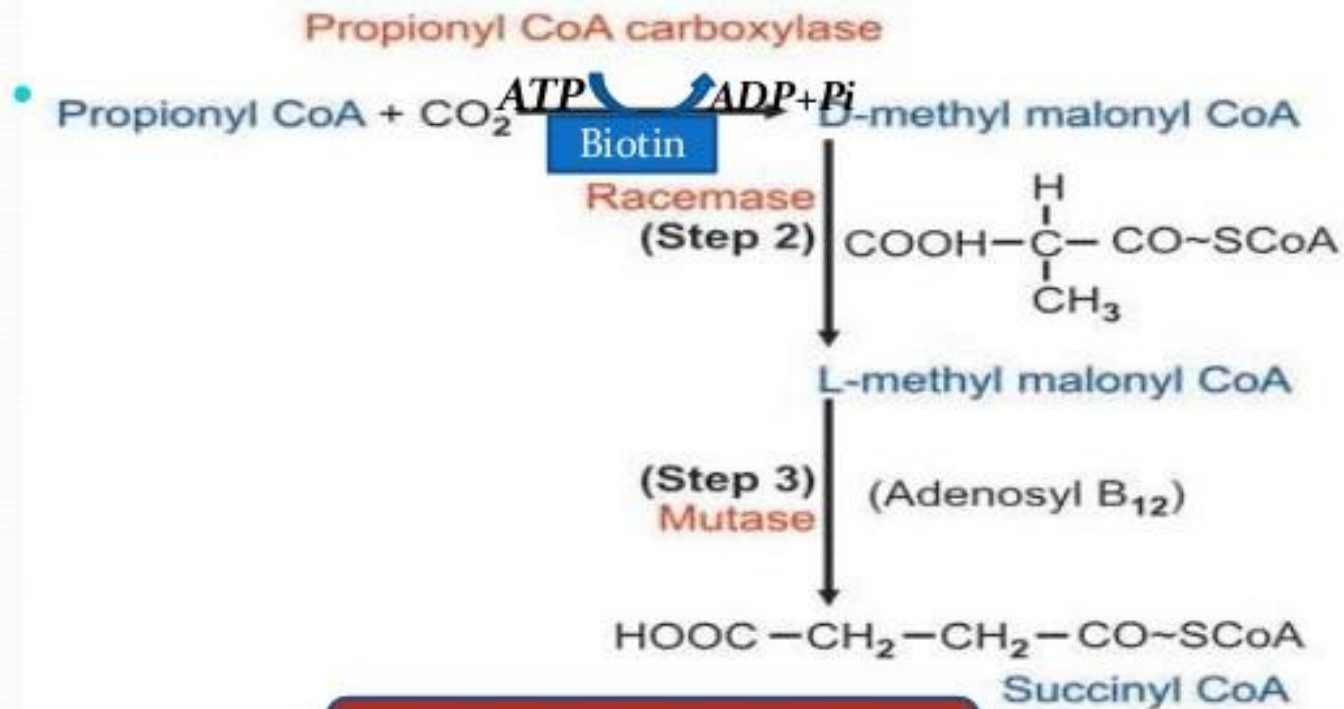
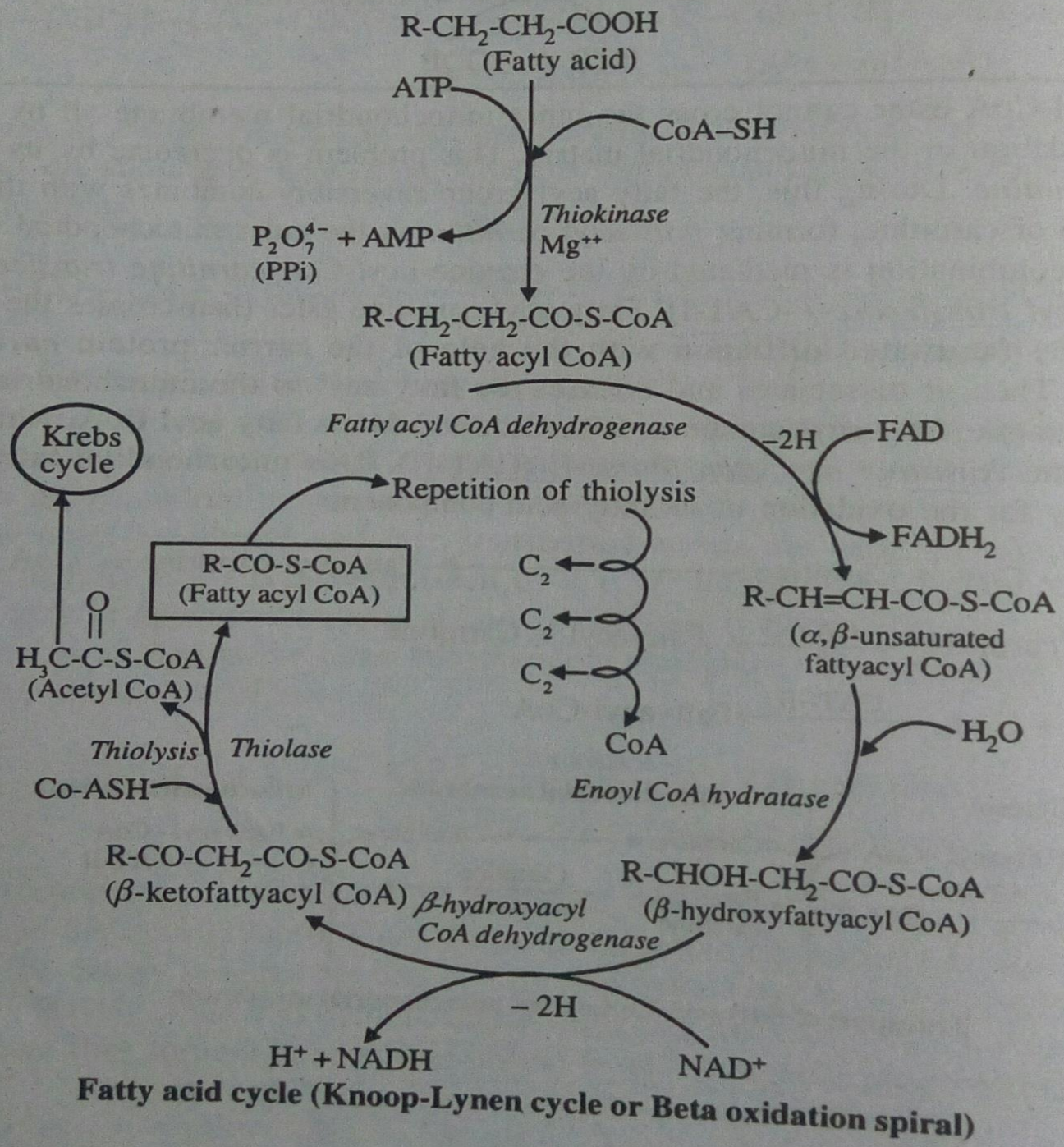


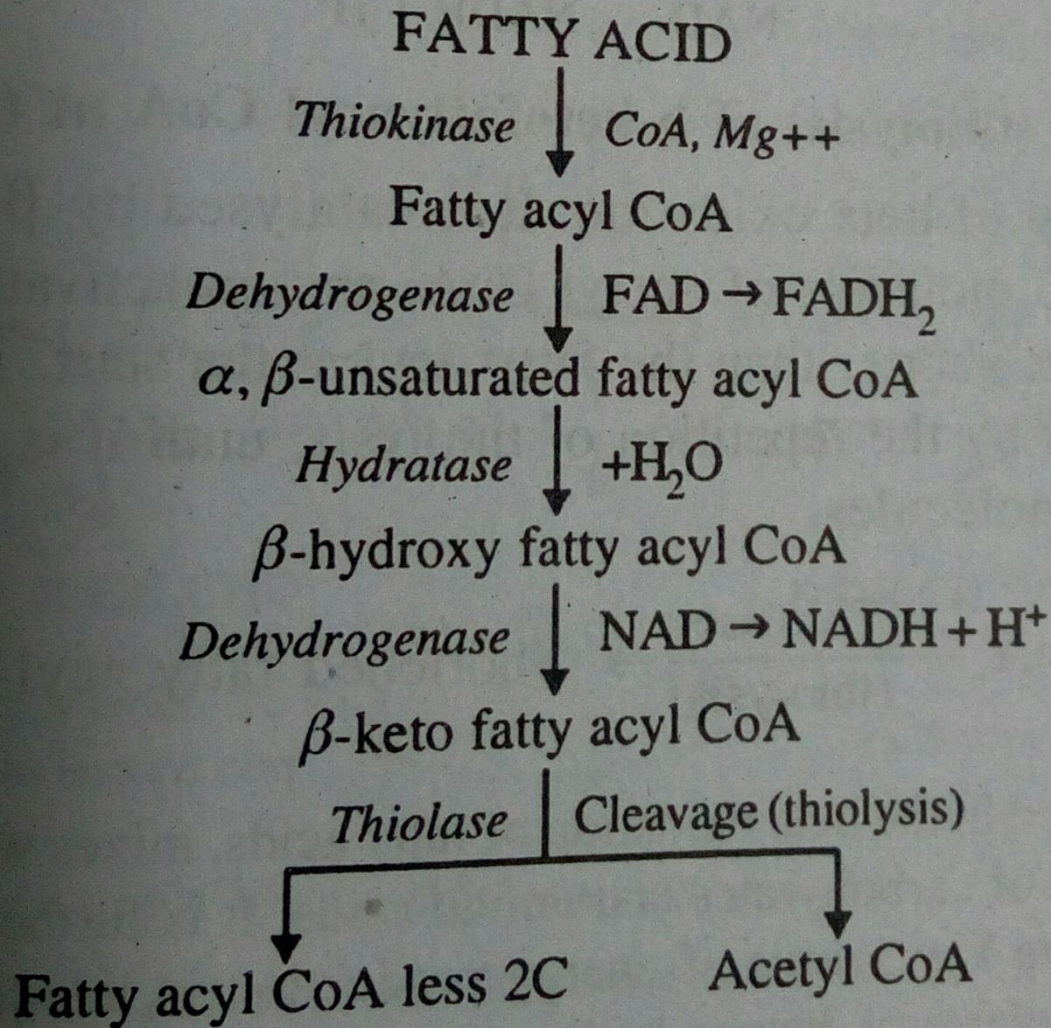
Fig: -Fate of Propionyl CoA



**Fatty acid cycle (Knoop-Lynen cycle or Beta oxidation spiral)**

NADH + H<sup>+</sup>

## Fatty acid cycle - removal of acetyl CoA unit (Circular flow chart)

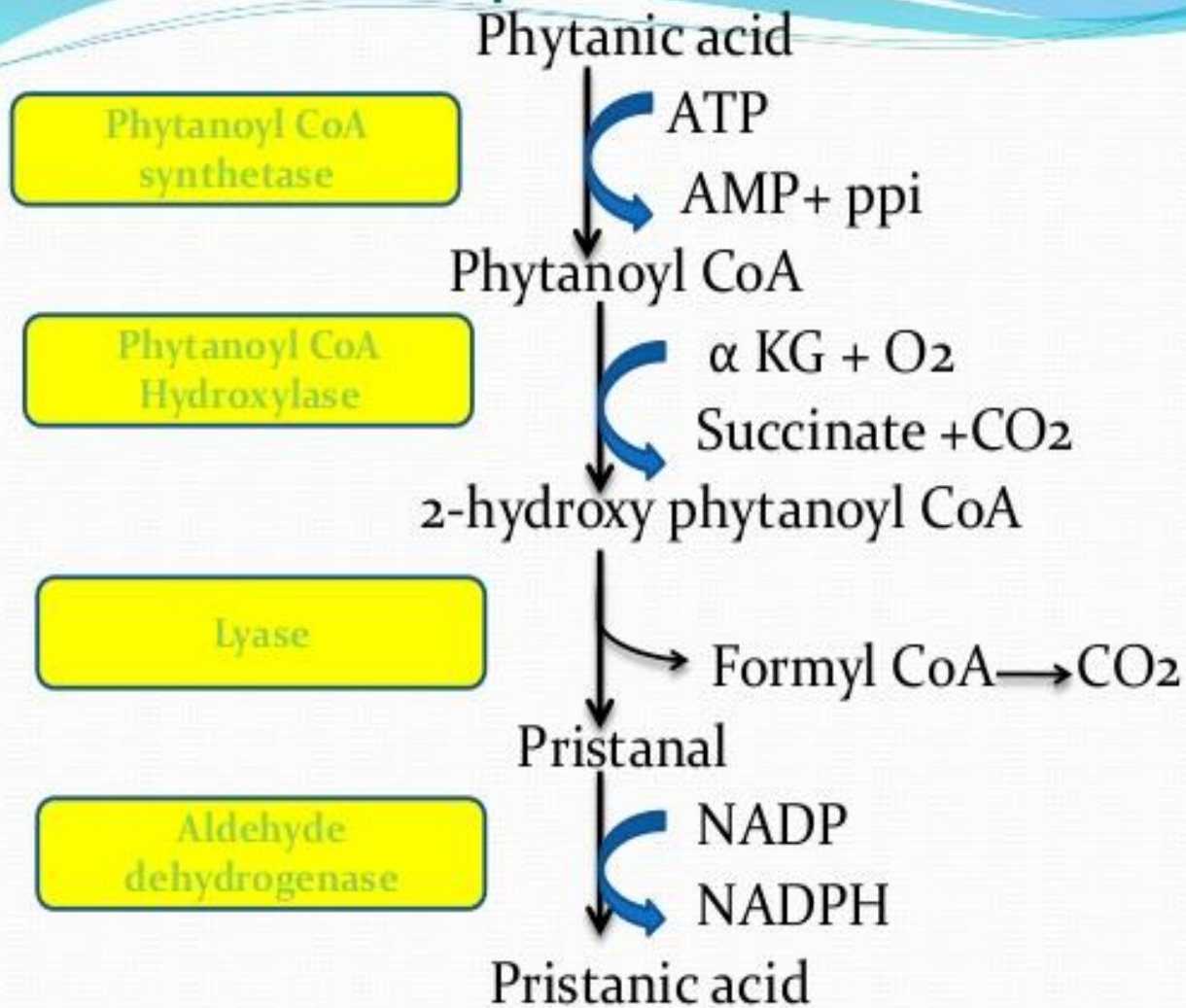


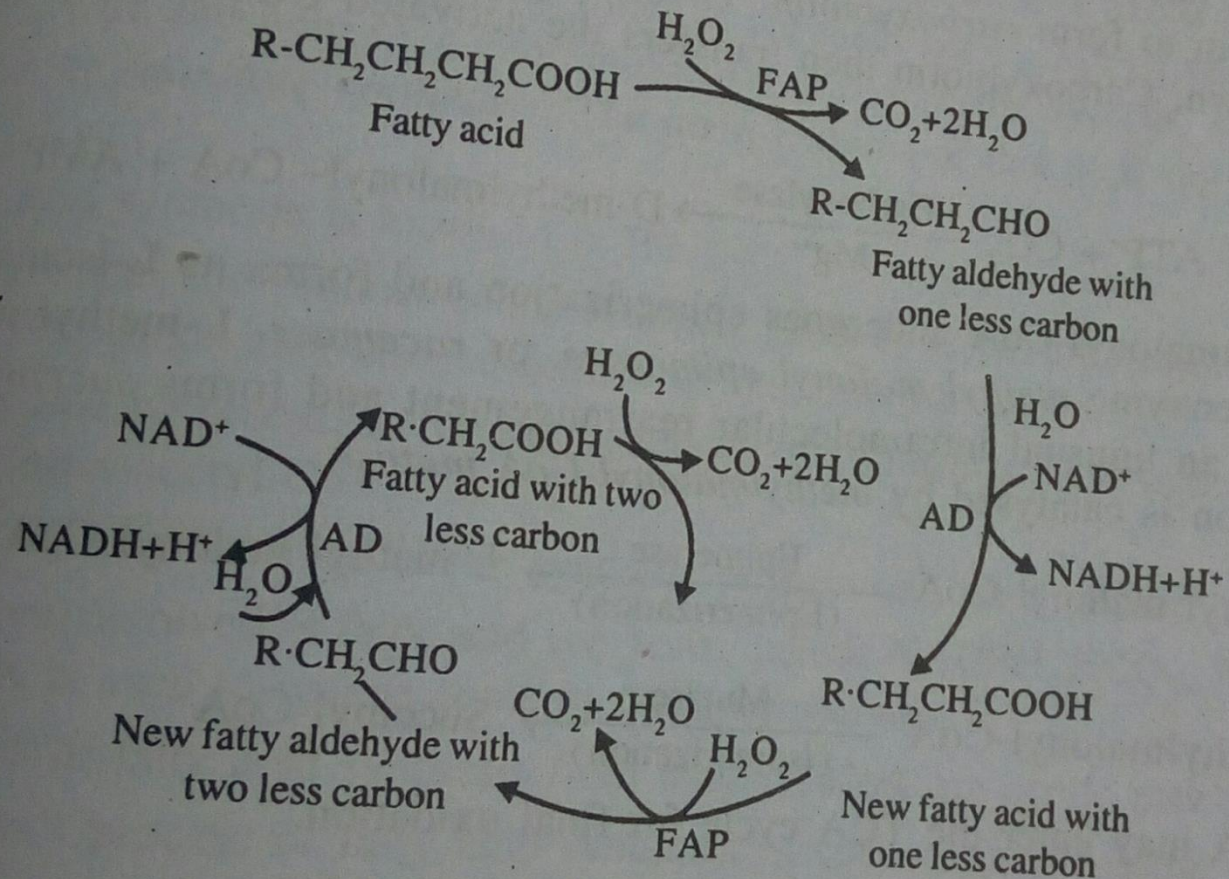


## Alpha - oxidation

- *Defined as the oxidation of fatty acid (methyl group at beta carbon) with the removal of one carbon unit adjacent to the  $\alpha$  carbon from the carboxylic end in the form of  $\text{CO}_2$*
- *Alpha oxidation occurs in those fatty acids that have a **methyl group ( $\text{CH}_3$ )** at the beta-carbon, which blocks beta oxidation.*
- *Substrate: -**Phytanic acid**, which is present in milk or derived from phytol present in chlorophyll and animal fat*
- ***peroxisomes** is the cellular site.*
- *No production of ATP*

# Alpha Oxidation

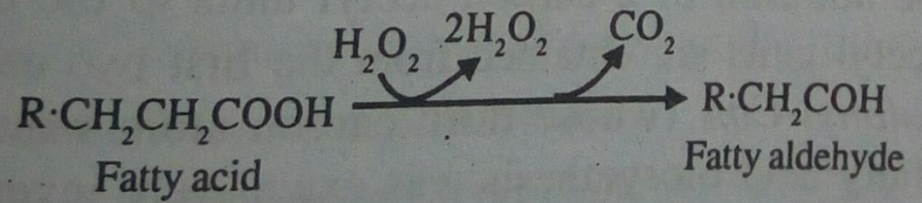




FAP-Fatty acid peroxidase

AD<sup>o</sup>-Aldehyde dehydrogenase

**α -Oxidation of fatty acids**



# Fatty Acid Synthesis

- **Intramitochondrial**

(for long chain fatty acids & elongation of existing fatty acids)

- Reversal of  $\beta$  oxidation
- All steps reversible (except  $\alpha$   $\beta$  unsaturated fatty acyl CoA  $\rightarrow$   $\beta$  hydroxy fatty acyl CoA)
- To bypass this, a new enzyme **enol CoA reductase** operates with NADPH as coenzyme.

- **Extramitochondrial**

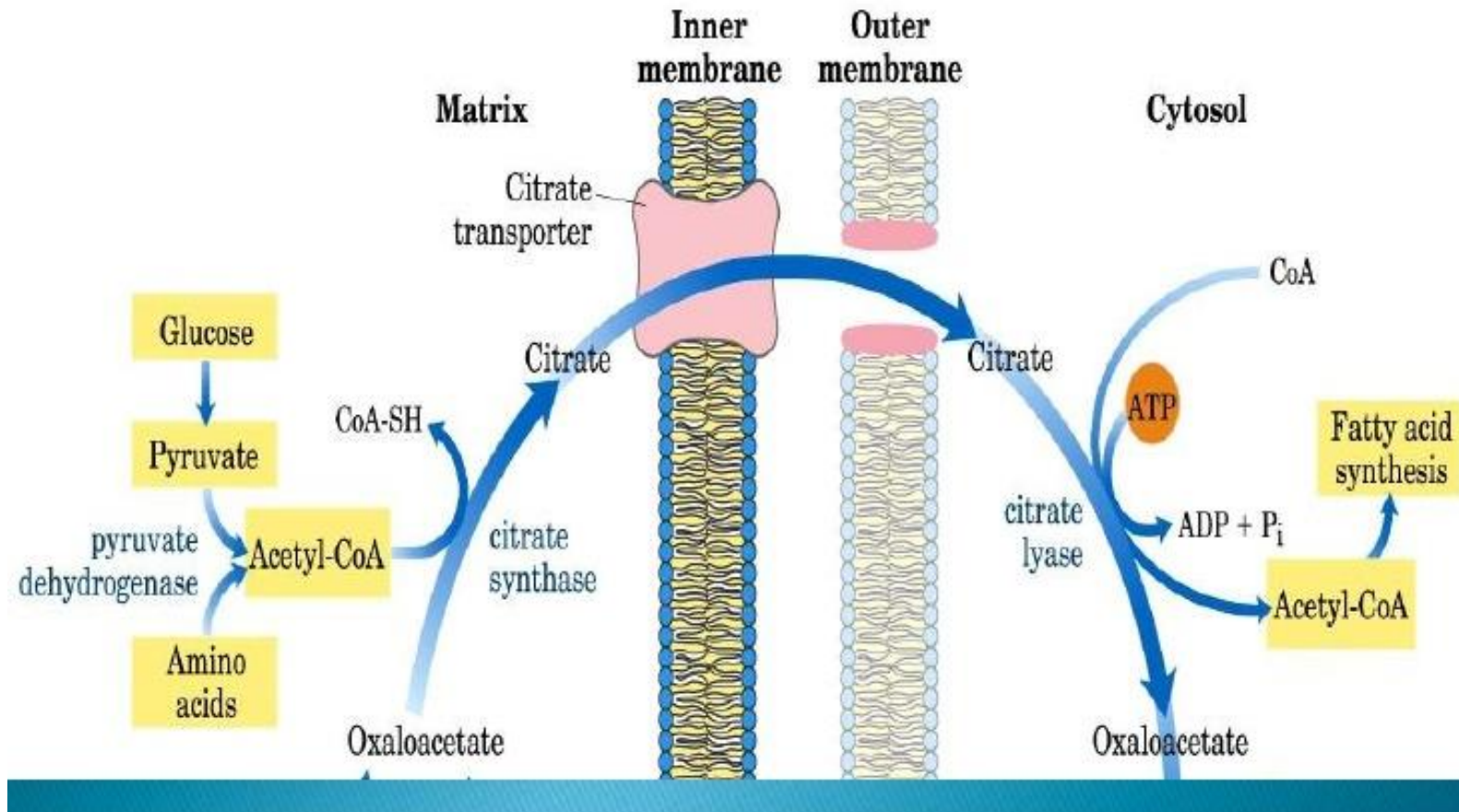
(exclusively for synthesis of palmitic acid – 16C)

- Located in ER
- Enzyme- fatty acid synthetase (palmitate synthetase)
- Precursor is Malonyl CoA synthesised from Acetyl CoA.
- NADPH, ATP etc. required
- Successive assemblage of 7 Malonyl CoA with 1 Acetyl CoA

# Acetyl CoA

- Inside mitochondria
  - From pyruvic acid
  - From Fatty acids
  - From Amino acids
- Can not diffuse to cytoplasm
- Need shuttle mechanisms
  - Transport protein Carnitine
  - Acetate thiokinase reaction
  - Citrate cleavage

# Transportation of Acetyl co A



# Transport of Acetyl-CoA from Mitochondria to Cytoplasm

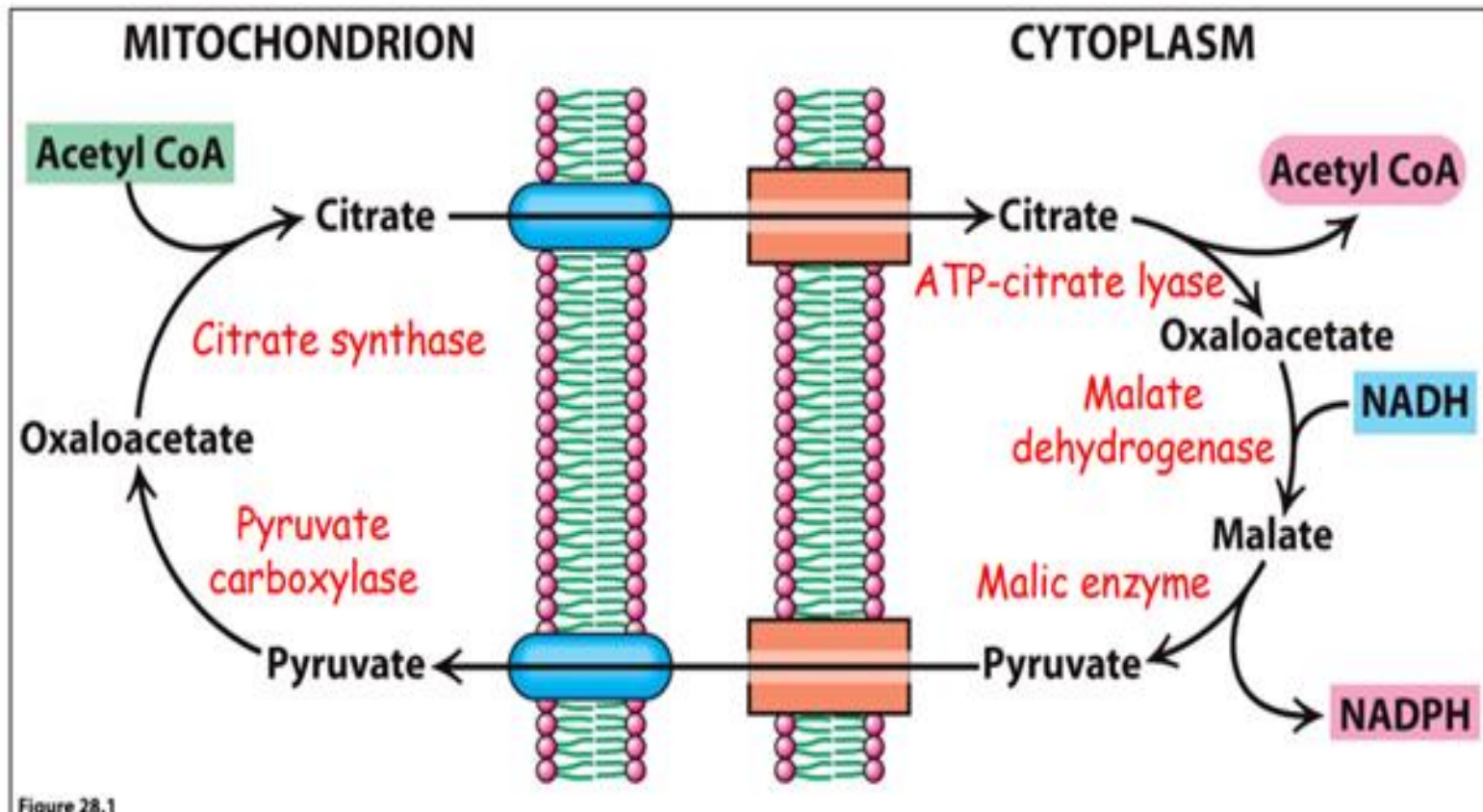


Figure 28.1

- Fatty Acid Synthase

- Acetyl-CoA serves as a primer
- Addition of two-carbon units from malonyl-CoA

- Acetyl CoA (2C) → Malonyl CoA (3C)

- Carboxylation of Acetyl CoA with bicarbonate (ATP & Acetyl CoA carboxylase)

- Each two-carbon unit added must be reduced by 2 NADPH + 2 H<sup>+</sup>

- Reaction for the synthesis of Palmitic acid (C:16):



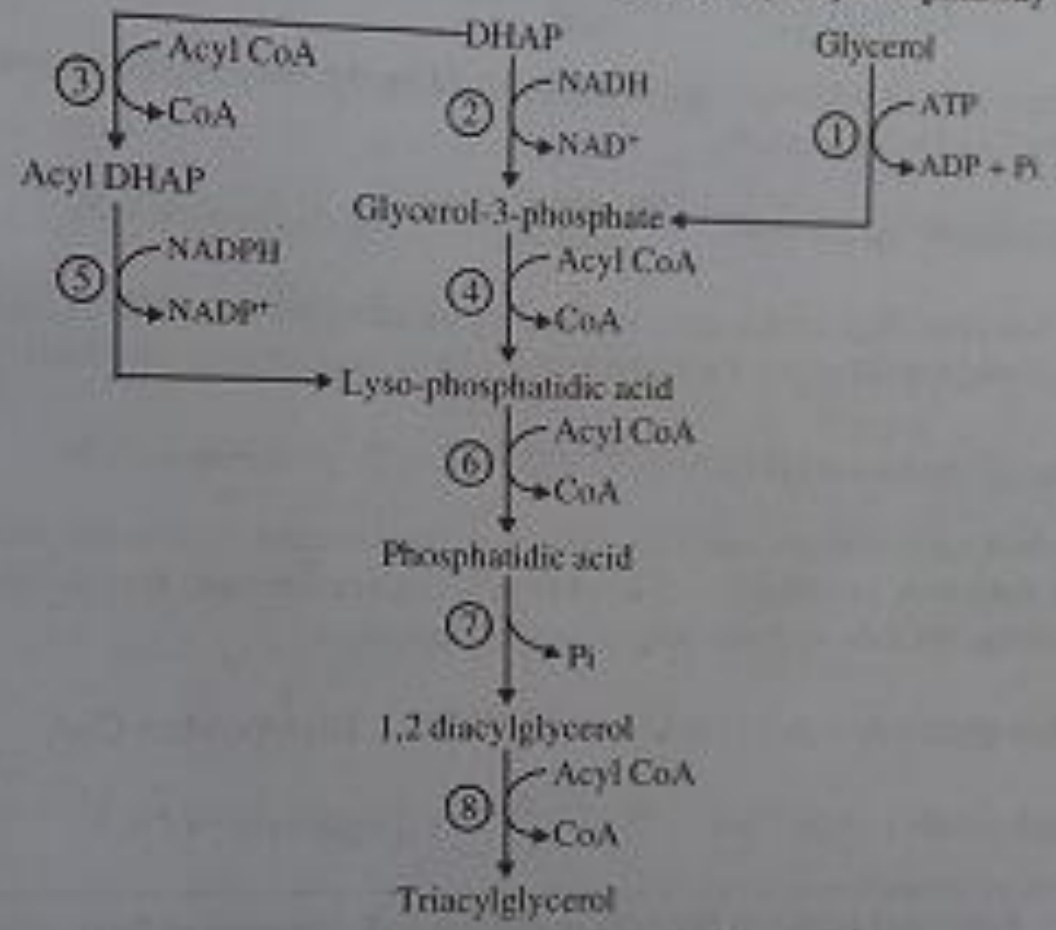


## Summary of palmitic acid synthesis

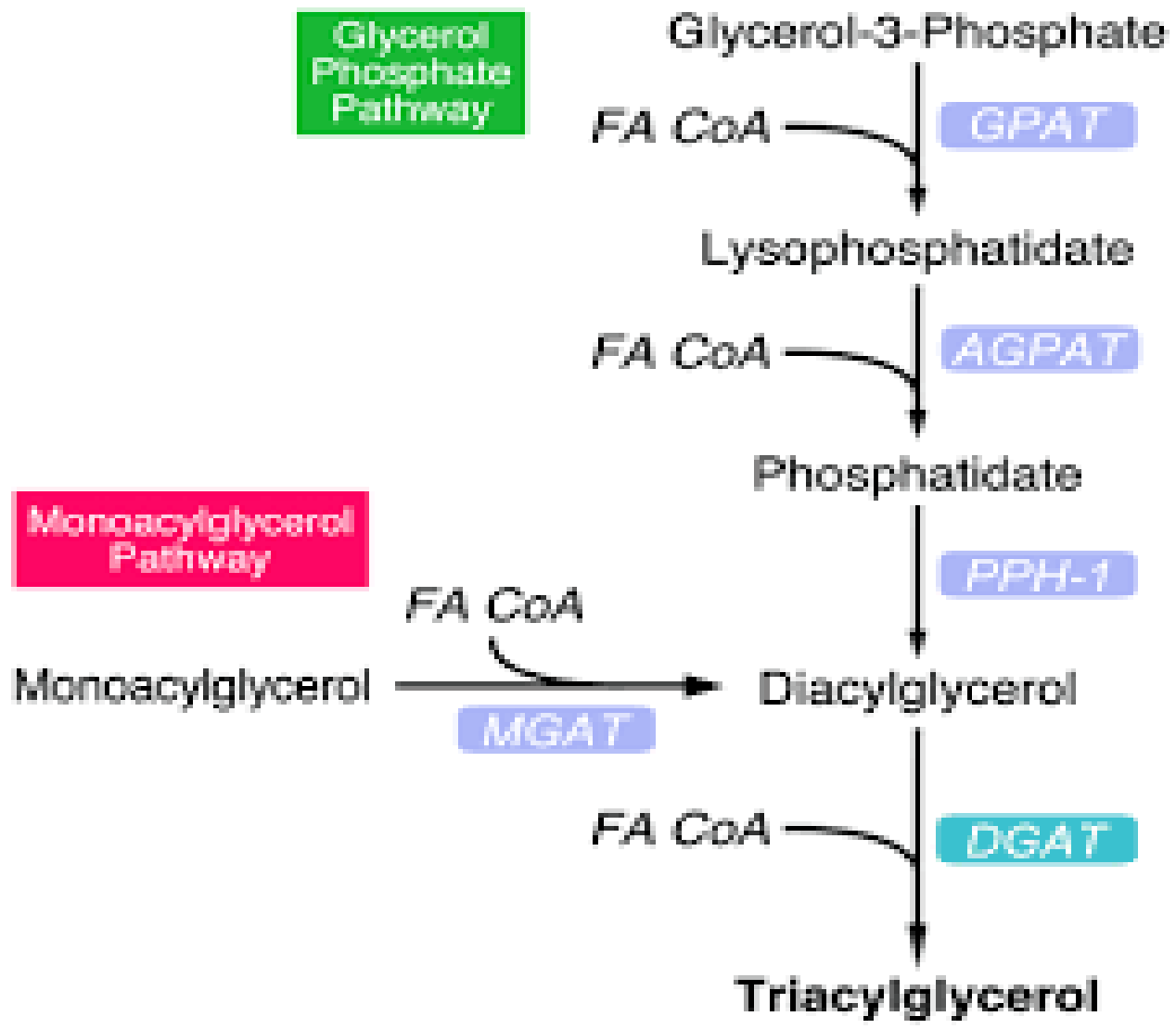
- (i)  $\text{Acetyl CoA} + \text{HCO}_3^- + \text{ATP} \xrightarrow[\text{Mg}^{++}]{\textcircled{1}} \text{Malonyl CoA} + \text{ADP} + \text{Pi}$
- (ii)  $\text{Acetyl CoA} + \text{ACP - SH} \xrightarrow{\textcircled{2}} \text{Acetyl - S - ACP}$
- (iii)  $\text{Malonyl CoA} + \text{ACP - SH} \xrightarrow{\textcircled{3}} \text{Malonyl - S - ACP}$
- (iv)  $\text{Malonyl CoA} + \text{Acetyl CoA} \xrightarrow[\text{(Condensation)}]{\textcircled{4}} \text{Acetoacetyl CoA}$
- (v)  $\text{Acetoacetyl CoA} + \text{NADPH} + \text{H}^+ \xrightarrow[\text{(Reduction)}]{\textcircled{5}} \beta\text{-hydroxybutyryl CoA}$
- (vi)  $\text{Hydroxybutyryl CoA} \xrightarrow[\text{(Dehydration)}]{\textcircled{6}} \text{Crotonyl CoA}$
- (vii)  $\text{Crotonyl CoA} + \text{NADPH} + \text{H}^+ \xrightarrow[\text{(Reduction)}]{\textcircled{7}} \text{Butyryl CoA}$
- (viii)  $\text{Polymerisation of butyryl units} \xrightarrow{\textcircled{8}} \text{Palmitic acid}$
- (ix)  $\text{Enzyme - bound palmitic acid} \xrightarrow[\text{(Cleavage)}]{\textcircled{8}} \text{Free palmitic acid} + \text{free enzyme}$

DHAP pathway

Glycerol phosphate pathway

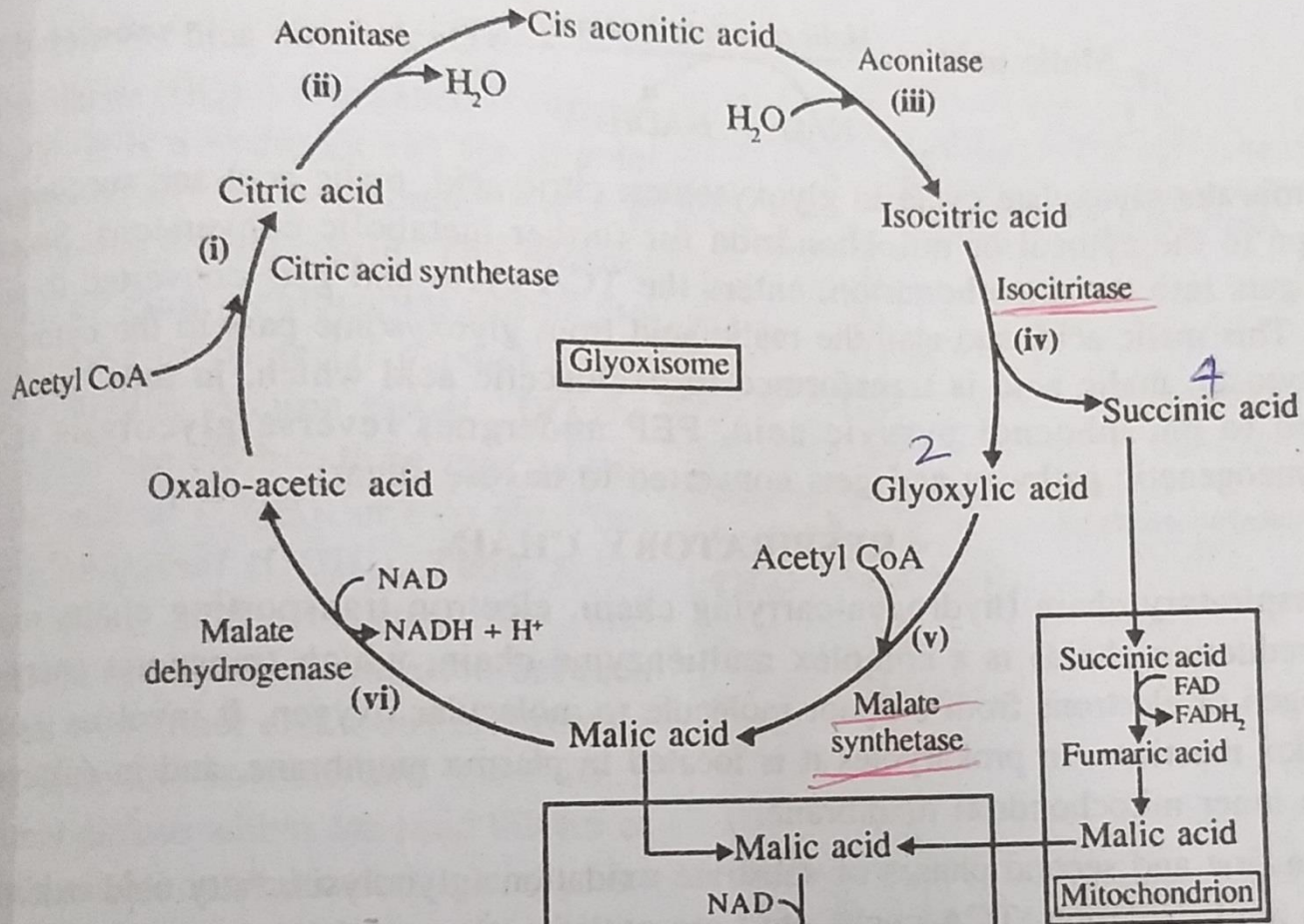


Generalised pathways of triglyceride synthesis

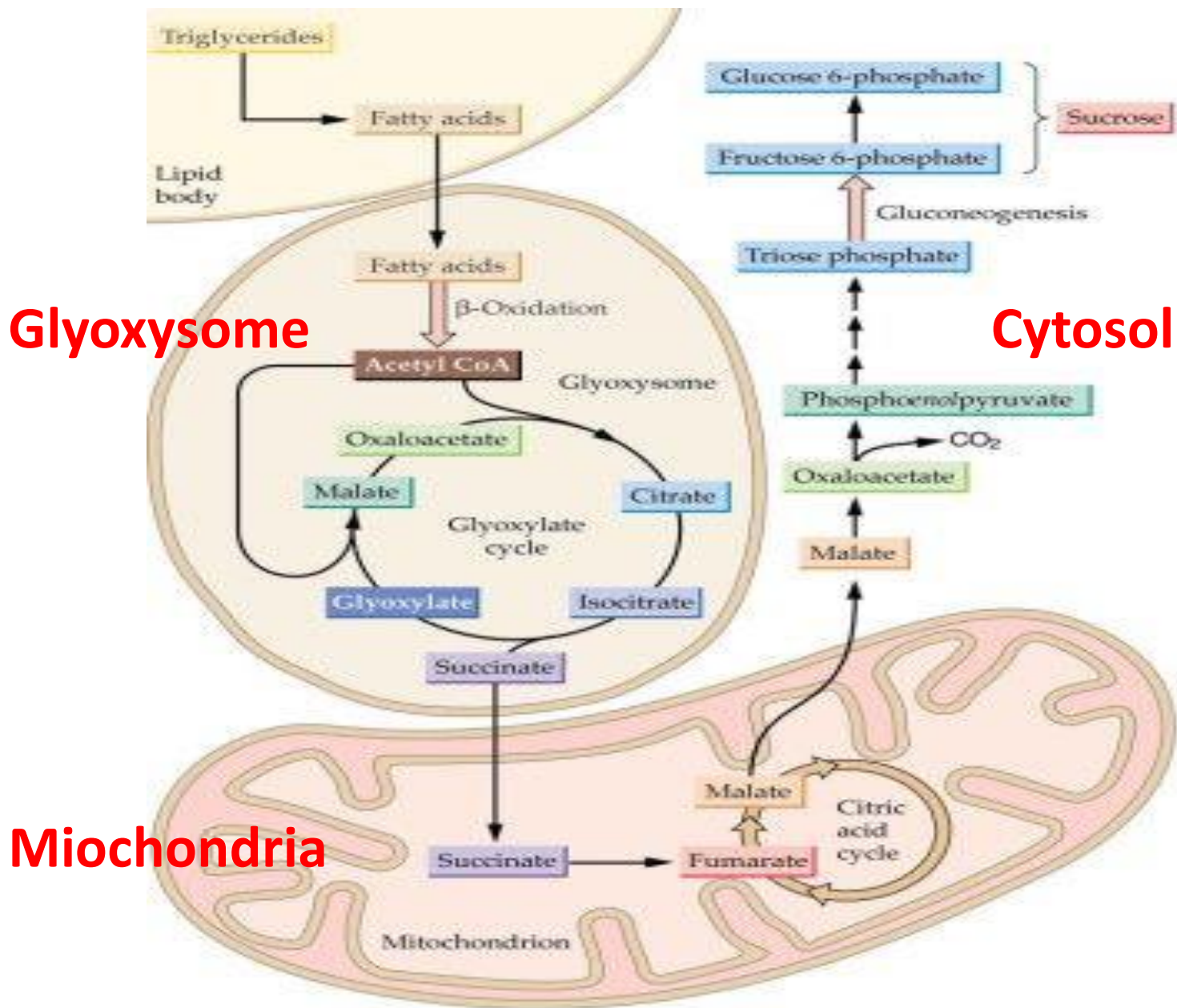


# β-Oxidation & Fatty Acid Synthesis Compared

	<b>β Oxidation Pathway</b>	<b>Fatty Acid Synthesis</b>
<b>pathway location</b>	mitochondrial matrix	cytosol
<b>acyl carriers (thiols)</b>	Coenzyme-A	phosphopantetheine (ACP) & cysteine
<b>e<sup>-</sup> acceptors/donor</b>	FAD & NAD <sup>+</sup>	NADPH
<b>-OH intermediate</b>	L	D
<b>2-C product/donor</b>	acetyl-CoA	malonyl-CoA (& acetyl-CoA)



Flow chart of glyoxylic acid cycle



**Glyoxysome**

**Cytosol**

**Mitochondria**