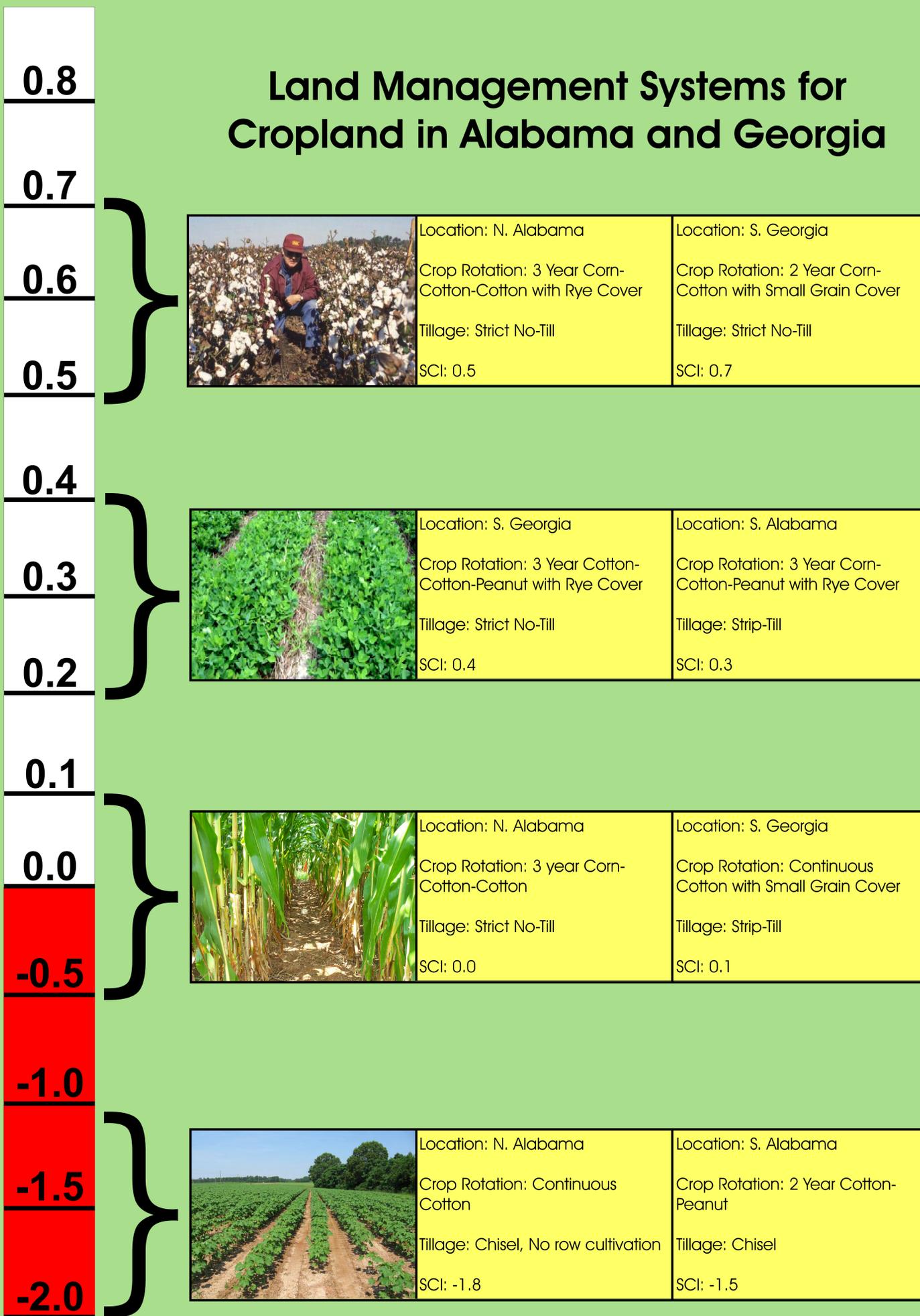


Soil Quality Management

What It Can Mean on Your Farm



*SCI ratings for each land management system presented are averages over multiple sites at the indicated location.

** SCI ratings for the land management systems presented are dependent on management, topography and soil type. Therefore, the SCI rating may be different when reported for a specific location or farm.

*** All cover crops are planted using conservation tillage.

The *Soil Conditioning Index (SCI)* is a management tool that can help us understand the impact of different land management systems on the level of soil organic matter and vulnerability to soil erosion. Organic matter is a primary indicator of soil quality and an important factor in capturing carbon and global climate change. If the SCI is positive, then the management system will likely improve the level of organic matter in the soil. If the SCI is negative, then the system will likely reduce soil organic matter.

The SCI plays a critical role in determining the basic eligibility of cropland for the Conservation Security Program (CSP). A rating of 0.0 on the SCI is required for participation in the CSP. In addition, program participants in Alabama and Georgia can earn an enhancement payment of \$1.16 per eligible acre for each 0.1 increase in the SCI above 0.0.

SCI