



CONSERVATION FARMING SYSTEMS IN THE SOUTHEASTERN U.S.

A 2018 publication titled “[A simple guide for conservation systems in the southeast](#)” from the USDA-ARS National Soil Dynamics Laboratory at Auburn, Alabama provides guidance for incorporating conservation practices such as reduced tillage and cover crops into a farming system in the southeastern U.S. Selected topics in this publication follow.

technology advancements is located [here](#) and [here](#), and on the [Sustainability Resource Page](#) on this website.

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What is a Conservation System? This section of the publication provides a definition of the term “Conservation Systems” as well as the benefits from adopting conservation practices.

Transitioning to a Conservation Farming System. This section provides access to fact sheets that contain information about the myriad aspects of conservation systems used in agriculture.

Cover Crop Species Selection and Management. Cover Crops [CC] should be a major component of any conservation farming system, and several sections of this publication are devoted to selection of the proper CC species/mix, and the management and termination options for successful CC culture.

Managing Crop Residues. Accumulation of plant residue will necessarily be a product that results from adopting conservation practices, and ways of dealing with this end product are provided.

Making Conservation Systems Profitable. Transitioning to conservation farming will likely result in additional tangible costs. However, many of the benefits from conservation farming are either intangible or accrue over a long period; thus, they are difficult to economically quantify. Ways of realizing a tangible benefit from/assigning economic value to some of the intangible benefits that result from the adoption of conservation farming practices are presented.

In the years since the publication of this guide, myriad advances in conservation farming practices—e.g. newer/better CC species—have been developed and/or are forthcoming. Information about many of these