Policy Statement - To provide retirement income, disability, and death benefits to eligible individuals holding federal appointments. New employees will not be able to join these plans after January 1, 2003 per the 2002 Farm Bill.

Eligibility - To be eligible for federal retirement, an individual must have the following:

- A federal appointment granted by the Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension;
- At least 50% effort directed toward Cooperative Extension; and
- An appropriate title.

Participation – Employees may participate in a retirement system in accordance with the following:

- **Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)** - By law, eligible individuals with federal appointments hired prior to January 1, 1984, or rehired with less than a 365-day break since the last federal appointment, participate in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). The rehire must have separated from their previous employment subject to CSRS.

- **Civil Service Retirement System-Offset (CSRS-Offset)** - By law, eligible individuals rehired under a federal appointment with more than a 365-day break and with five (5) or more years of service in the Civil Service Retirement System, participate in the Civil Service-Offset Program.

  Note: Eligible rehires participating in CSRS or CSRS-Offset have the option to transfer to the Federal Employees' Retirement System within 6 months of rehire.

- **Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS)** - By law, eligible individuals newly hired on or after January 1, 1984, participate in the Federal Employees' Retirement System.

  Note: Eligible individuals hired with retirement service credit in the New York State Employees' Retirement System (NYSERS), New York State Teachers Retirement (NYSTRS), or Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association/College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA/CREF) have the option of continuing that plan or choosing the Federal Employees' Retirement System and should contact Administrative Systems on campus for counseling at 607-255-0795.
Contributions (as of July 1, 1991) – Contributions towards the applicable plans are as follows:

- **Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS)** - Employees in CSRS contribute 7% of their gross salary to the Federal Retirement System and do not participate in Social Security (FICA portion). The Medicare portion of Social Security is mandatory, currently 1.45% of gross salary.

- **Civil Service Retirement System - Offset (CSRS-Offset)** - Employees in CSRS Offset contribute .8% of their gross salary to the Federal Retirement System and 7.65% toward Social Security and Medicare.

- **Federal Employees’ Retirement System (FERS)** - Employees in FERS contribute .8% of their gross salary to the Federal Retirement System and 7.65% toward Social Security and Medicare.

- **Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)** - FERS members are eligible to contribute 1% to 12% of their salary to the Thrift Savings Plan, a tax-deferred savings plan. Employees enrolled in CSRS and CSRS-Offset may contribute up to 7% of their salary to the Thrift Savings Plan.

**Contact Information** - To acquire additional information, contact the association’s designated benefits coordinator or Administrative Systems on campus at 607-255-0795.