

MICHELE H. PERCHONOK, Ph.D.

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Dr. Michele Perchonok has been the Advanced Food System lead at NASA/Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas since September 2000. Her responsibilities include space food product development, menu definition, nutritional requirements implementation, food processing, and food packaging development for long duration exploratory missions. She also integrates NASA-funded external research with the internal research at Johnson Space Center.

Dr. Perchonok received her Bachelor's of Science in Chemistry at Brown University. She earned her Masters and Ph.D. in Food Science with minors in Nutritional Biochemistry and Marketing from Cornell University in 1981 and 1983, respectively.

From 1983 – 1985, Dr. Perchonok worked at The Quaker Oats Company in the Pet Food Division as an Associate Scientist. From 1985 – 1986, she worked at Lockheed Engineering and Management Services Company on the Food Service and Supply System contract. The result of the contract provided the requirements for the Space Station Food System.

From 1986 – 2000, Dr. Perchonok worked at Riviana Foods, Inc. She was responsible for the product development of rice mixes and other rice products for the food service, retail, international, and industrial markets. She initiated shelf life testing of raw ingredients, sourcing of alternate ingredient suppliers, and implemented nutritional and ingredient labeling and product specifications. She coordinated efforts with Quality Assurance, Purchasing, Manufacturing, and Marketing.

Michele Perchonok is active in the Institute of Food Technologists. Currently, she is a member of the Task Force on Governance and the Task Force on Strategic Development. Dr. Perchonok recently completed a 3 year term on the Executive Committee as a Membership Representative. Prior to her participation in the Executive Committee, she was the Chair of Nominations and Elections Committee, Chair of Continuing Education Committee, and Chair of the Product Development Division. She has held several positions in the Texas Section including Chair and Councilor.