

# Purple Asparagus Newsletter

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## January 2010 Newsletter

Greetings!

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So call us crazy, but here at Purple Asparagus, we love January.

Yes, it's cold. But a big sweater and a warm cup of tea go a long way in curing the chill. Plus, I find the cold inspiring, whether to bake bread, to braise, or just to get back into my kitchen. And the snow, sleet, and ice, these "inconveniences" are simply an excuse to slow down and stay home. When I don't feel the pressure to get out of the house or the competing draw of outside activities, I can turn our attention to our long forgotten projects (like this newsletter). Plus, my son allows me to see the weather through the eyes of a 5 year old. Snow isn't an impediment to a commute, it's a snow man waiting to happen.

Warm Winter Wishes,

Melissa Graham  
President/Founder

So Samosa!



Have you tried India's delicious dumpling? Join [Purple Asparagus](#) at [Smarty Party](#) on January 31 from 3 to 4:30pm where you'll learn to make the subcontinent's savory snack with renowned home cook, Nikita Kejriwal. Form and roll the dough, fill it with three delectable kid-friendly fillings, and prepare a tasty cilantro chutney. While the samosas are cooking, you'll enjoy Indian games and other fun. Before you leave, sit down to a sumptuous Indian spread of freshly made samosas and chutneys.

\$40.00 for a parent/child duo. RSVP to Smarty Party at [info@smartyparty.us](mailto:info@smartyparty.us) or 773.687.0521.

Across the Table



Purple Asparagus is tickled to partner with [Across the Table](#), a non-profit dedicated to uniting Chicago through dinners designed to promote dynamic conversation between diverse participants. Our dinner, focused on food justice, will be at Green Zebra. To sign up, visit Across the Table's [website](#). To learn more about Across the Table, check out the following feature in [Time Out Chicago](#).

### Think Global, Eat Local

It's terrific to see so many Chicago restaurants reaching out to help the victims of the earthquake in Haiti and there's still time to participate. Check out this list on the Chicago Reader's [website](#) or search hashtag #chihelpshaiti on Twitter.

### The Myth of High Cost

The [Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture](#) documented and compared the prices of local and non-local produce in Iowa during the growing months of June, July and August 2009, concluding that the cost of buying local produce was less per pound.

A great source for local AND organic produce is Growing Home who is offering shares online for its 2010 season, including spring, summer and fall produce as well as egg shares. To register, visit Growing Home's [site](#).

To learn more about Growing Home, attend a new educational series at its Wood Street Urban Farm. The next installment of Englewood Nights takes place on January 28 at 6:00pm where they will be screening the nationally recognized documentary Food, Inc.

### How Does Your Garden Grow?

In the wake of the controversial attack on school gardens by Catilin Flanagan in [The Atlantic](#), check out sustainable food blog, [Civil Eats](#), which just posted a look into eight successful school gardens and a resource list for starting your own.

For some well-reasoned rebuttals to Flanagan's odd and politically charged polemic, check out Tom Philpott on [Grist](#), Samuel Fromartz on [Huffington Post](#), and my friend and Edible Schoolyard volunteer, Sarah Henry, on her blog [Lettuce Eat Kale](#).

### School Lunch

You may have noticed that there has been a lot of focus on school lunch these days. The Child

Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, which authorizes all of the federal school meal and child nutrition programs, was originally set to expire September 2009. The Act was extended through the Agriculture Appropriations Bill and will come up again this fall. To learn more about the various proposals and how to take action, there are several blogs and online resources, including [Healthy Schools Campaign](#), [Community Food Security Coalition](#), [the National Farm to School Network](#), and [Slow Food USA](#).

For an insiders perspective of school lunch, check out this brand new [blog](#) written by a school teacher who has committed to eat the cafeteria offerings every school day in 2010. Bet she can't wait until the summer!

### Picky Eaters

Tired of fights at the dinner table, want new ideas and strategies for feeding your family well, then join Northside Parents Network for their January Parent University on January 30 from 10:30 to noon at Flourish Studios, where Elena Marre, Purple Asparagus board member and owner of the 'The Kids' Table' and myself, Melissa Graham as we discuss solving the puzzle of the picky eater. To reserve a space, visit NPN's [website](#).

If you aren't able to join us, [The Kids Table](#) has a terrific offering of classes for parents and kids or take a look at my blog, [Little Locavores](#), where I detail the adventures of family eating fresh from the farmers' market.

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### Purple Asparagus

A non-profit organization dedicated to bringing families back to the table by promoting and enjoying all the things associated with good eating.

