

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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the transaxle drive pulley has a nut to hold on the pulley."

Joe D. White, Franklin, Ky.: "My worst buy is my 2003 Deere L130 lawn tractor. I've spent a total of \$950 on repairs and parts on it. The tractor's rear tires were poorly chosen and won't pull the tractor up hills. I'm not sure if it was the tire profile or the tread that was the problem, but when I replaced the tires it made a big difference. The tractor had a weak front axle, and as a result eventually the front wheels bent outward. I had to remove the axle and heat and bend it in order to get the proper alignment back. There's no way to adjust the tow-in. I had to replace the clutch at 400 hours. The front axle broke in half. I had to replace both steering rods and the steering sector gear and oil drain plug. I replaced normal maintenance items such as the belts, deck spindles, etc. Then this spring the transmission went out and it would have cost about \$1,000 to replace. I said 'no thank you'. The only good thing about this mower was the 23 hp Kohler engine."

Jim Ruen, Lanesboro, Minn.: "Five years ago I wrote a 'best buy' report on my **Easy Set Mole Trap**. I haven't had a mole problem since I bought the trap. Recently my FedEx deliveryman mentioned that he was having a problem with moles, so I showed him my trap. He called up the distributor, Bob Bruno, and ordered one. The next day Bruno drove 30 some miles to drop off the trap. My friend was delighted about the service and the fact that the trap quickly took care of his problem."

"The other day one of my neighbors was digging in his yard when I stopped by. He told me about his mole problem. I loaned him my trap. It worked so well that he's ordering his own. That Easy Set is a mole's worst enemy. Check it out at www.easymoletrap.com or call 888 778-79887."



Paul Marley, Oconee, Ill., converted his 6-row Deere 7000 planter into a no-till rig 3 years ago by mounting **Yetter** (www.yetterco.com) front openers on the row units and **Martin** (www.martinandcompany.com) closing wheels on back.

"I've been real pleased. These are a good combination for planting into both corn and soybean ground," says Marley.

Dick Dettmer, Huntertown, Ind.: "I like my 2008 **SawStop** table saw (ph 866 729-7867; www.sawstop.com). I've worked with wood for many years, making all types of furniture, but this is the safest table saw I've seen anywhere. You can't cut yourself while using it. If you hit the blade with your finger, or other body part, it stops immediately. It's hard to believe unless you see it work. In addition to the safety features, the saw has less vibration and is more accurate than any saw I've ever used."

Tim Heal, Snowflake, Ariz.: My 2006 **Kubota** L3400 loader tractor equipped with a backhoe is my best buy. It's a powerful machine. I'm well pleased with it."

Alan M. Tierney, Capron, Ill.: Alan nominates his 2000 **Caterpillar** 246 skid steer loader as his "worst buy". "It has 1,058 hours on it. The oil pump housing broke and went completely through the engine, ruining it. It cost more than \$8,000 to fix. There has

been one problem after another. I'd never recommend this skid steer to anyone."

Bill Barg, Cincinnati, Ohio: "My 1974 **Kubota** L225 tractor still runs great, and the engine has never lost one drop of oil."

"My worst buy is the 1998 hot water pressure washer I bought from **Northern Tool**. I paid \$2,200 for it. The first time I used it all the joints leaked. I took it to the place that did the warranty work, but the company wouldn't pay because they said the problem was due to normal wear and tear. The washer has been in repair shops ever since. The company won't stand behind the warranty, and parts are impossible to get."

Robert Stockhoff, Dufur, Oregon: "No problems with our 2007 **Ford** Fusion car. It's comfortable and fuel efficient."

"My 1969 **Deere** 4020 diesel tractor is a best buy. It was our main tractor for 30 years while we were farming 200 to 300 acres of row and field crops. It was always dependable and required minimal maintenance, and it was also fuel efficient."

"Many newer products aren't built with the same quality as 25 to 30 years ago. I fix most everything myself, but it's hard to find parts for these newer products. And when you do, they're expensive."

J. Gary Salyer, Floyd, Va.: "I like my 1987 **Little Giant** log splitter (Richfield Lawn and Garden, Inc., McClure, Ohio 43534). It's equipped with a 5 hp Briggs & Stratton engine with a 2-stage pump. This splitter has never failed me and has required only routine maintenance."

A 1996 **Dodge** 2500 pickup rates as his "worst buy". "I bought this pickup used with about 98,000 miles and paid \$4,000. Since then I've put on about 34,000 miles and spent another \$4,000 on repairs. I had to replace the transmission, water pump, and basically the entire front end, including tie rod ends and universal joints. The gas mileage is really bad, but I'm in too deep to get rid of it."

Edward Pruitt, Pinnacle, N.C.: "I've always had trouble starting this tractor," says Edward about his 1964 **Massey Ferguson** 35 diesel tractor. "The problem is worst during winter, but even in summer I have to wait until the sun warms the tractor up before it'll start. Sometimes it acts like it wants to start but then sparks and smoke come off the starter. I installed a new solenoid, and the battery is new. The starter has been tested, but I'm told there's nothing wrong with it."

James Stoffel, Allenton, Wis.: James is the proud owner of a 2004 **Dodge** Ram 250 4-WD pickup. "This was my first new pickup, and there were many problems during the first 7,000 miles. Fortunately, the pickup came with a 4-year warranty. I wanted to replace the upper and lower ball joints but I couldn't get the wheel hubs off - they were totally frozen on. Finally, after spending more than \$1,000 I got the job done. I asked several dealers and they all said it's a common problem."

Paul Kile, Beaverton, Mich.: "No problems with my 2005 **Cub Cadet** lawn tractor. I just change the oil, grease it, and sharpen the blades."

Eldon Shattuck, Carson City, Mich.: "We used our **Huskee** 21-ton log splitter to split wood for about 3 months before the bottom plate that holds the wood blocks broke. We had it rebuilt, adding a 3/4-in. thick steel plate under the block plate to support it."

"My 2009 **Poulan** 3416 18-in. chainsaw is my worst buy. As soon as I got it home I filled it with fuel and got it started, but then it stopped. I tried cranking it for 20 min. but still couldn't get it started. I took the saw to a dealer who worked on it for 10 min. and got it started. But when I got home the saw



"Best Buy" Kubota Fitted With Home-Built Loader

Larry Genge, Glovertown, Newfoundland, nominates his 1986 **Kubota** B6100 4-WD 14 hp diesel tractor, fitted with a home-built loader and bucket, as his "best buy".

"This tractor has more than 1,000 hrs. on it and it has performed flawlessly over the years. I use it for general yard work and for handling logs at my sawmill. I can fit the bucket with forks for handling logs, and also a snowblade for moving snow. The bucket is 42 in. wide and can be raised up to 6 ft. high. It'll lift 500 to 600 lbs. To compensate for that weight I mounted a 400-lb. weight

box on back of the tractor.

"I made my own quick release hydraulic disconnects for the bucket forks and snowblade, which lets me change attachments without having to get off the tractor.

"I used 2 by 3 by 1/8-in. box tubing to build the loader arms and 2 by 2 by 1/4-in. tubing to build the posts, which bolt onto a subframe that bolts onto the tractor. I used 1/8-in. thick plate steel to make the bucket. A pair of 1 1/2-in. dia., 16-in. long cylinders are used to raise and lower the loader."

wouldn't start. So now I have a new chainsaw that doesn't run. It just sits and collects dust."

Marvin Johnson, Lindsborg, Kansas: Marvin's the satisfied owner of a 2008 **Grasshopper** 729 riding mower. "We live in a small town which is less than a mile across. With a 10 mph road speed I can drive the mower to the lawns I take care of and leave my pickup and trailer at home. That lowers my monthly gas bill."

William Mai, Sharon Springs, Kansas: William's pleased with his 2009 **Hustler** Z 60-in. riding mower equipped with a diesel engine. "It's fuel efficient, using only about 1 gal. per hour even when mowing heavy weeds and grass. It maneuvers over rough

"It's fuel efficient, using only about 1 gal. per hour even when mowing heavy weeds."

terrain very well and has a great range of speeds."

Mark Jenkins, Amite, La.: "I like my **King Kutter** 4-ft., gear-driven rotary tiller. It comes with a pto shaft with heavy duty slip clutch and is available in 4, 5, and 6-ft. models. The 4-ft. model is offset to eliminate tire tracks. It seems to work as good as a Kuhn tiller but costs a lot less. And it's American-made."

Tammy R. Petrie, Morristown, N.Y.: "My 2008 **FarmTuff** 25-bu. manure spreader is my worst buy. It wouldn't spread manure without the shear pin breaking, even though we hauled only about 15 bu. at a time. The axles would constantly bend, and the chain plate for the beaters got bent so bad that the chain wouldn't stay on. We ended up replacing the axles which cost \$130, and completely did away with the beaters and apron chain."

Debbie Genge, Glovertown, New Foundland: "Three years ago my husband and son chipped in and bought me a

KitchenAid mixer which works great. I like it because I can easily have a batch of cookie dough mixing while I do something else. I love to spend time in the kitchen baking and cooking (and my husband loves eating it) so my **KitchenAid** comes in handy. I don't know how I ever did without it.

"I really like **Lodge Cast** iron cookware. I own 5 of their frying pans, a large oval roaster, loaf pan, wok – 12 pieces in all. It's all I cook with, and everything tastes better in cast iron. It's the only brand I'll buy."

Zebco 33 Classic fishing reel rates as her "worst buy". "My husband bought his reel a year before I bought mine. His was made in the U.S., while mine had the same name and model but was made in China. The price was the same, but my reel is in the garbage now while my husband's model still works perfect. He took my reel apart and found it had a lot of cheap, inferior parts that didn't fit right. It was annoying when he was catching all the trout while I was fiddling with the reel."

"Our 2000 **Toyota** Tundra 4-WD pickup is a worst buy. We bought it used in 2006 with about 120,000 miles on it. It had too many problems to list. The bottom line is that we spent about \$5,000 to \$7,000 on repair parts in just 3 years, not including labor. My husband, who is a mechanic, said he removed just about every bolt on this vehicle. It was our third and last Toyota."

Keith Edmondson: "My worst buy is the **Heritage Safe** I bought from Southern States Farmers Co-op. Heritage installed defective KARA B52 locks on these safes. When mine quit working they installed another lock that also went bad. I had to have a lock from S&G Lock Co. installed at a cost of \$459.95, and I got no help from either Heritage or Southern States."

Charles Diller, Dillsburg, Penn.: "My **Stihl** MS192 chainsaw is lightweight, which makes it great for cutting small diameter wood. It starts right up every time with very little effort."

"My **Maytag** clothes washer is a top load model with agitating gears made of plastic. It had to be serviced within 2 years of purchase