

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

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Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy
Send your nominations to:
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Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use
the survey form on our website at
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Everett Muhlhausen, Ellsworth, Wis.: “I own a 2012 **Deere** 3520 compact tractor equipped with a front-end loader, rear-mounted blade, 72-in. mower deck, and weight box. I also use a Deere snowblower with it. This tractor is easy to maneuver and has a lot of power for its size. It has no trouble handling any of the equipment. I’d recommend it to anyone.”

David Peck, Salem, Ore.: A 2012 **Toyota** Tacoma 2-WD pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine and automatic transmission rates as David’s “best buy”. “It runs great, is comfortable to drive, and gets 20 to 21 mpg. It’s equipped with blue tooth wireless technology, which works great.”

Thomas Borlie, Abingdon, Md.: “Last July I bought a **Snapper** riding mower equipped with a single bag catcher, and it wasn’t long before the bagger adapter that fits onto the mower deck started to plug up. The problem is that there’s a wide gap on both sides of the tube that feeds clippings from the mower up to the bag catcher’s cover. Excess grass clippings end up blowing out over the top of the engine and showering down on me.

“I called the company and was on the phone for an hour and a half listening to an

to remove the stumps with ease. This stump grinder works fast and comes with a spare set of tungsten teeth. However, I haven’t had to use them yet as the original teeth are still sharp and going strong. Best product ever!”

Gary Spohn, Tampa, Kan.: “I like my 2012 **Challenger** MB465B front wheel assist tractor equipped with a front-end loader. The front wheel assist allows the tractor to handle the loader with ease. It’s also a great baling tractor, and it starts right up all year long. I traded a Deere 4250 for it and it’ll pull anything the Deere could, while using less fuel.

“I bought a used 2001 **Chevrolet** pickup with about 12,000 miles on it, equipped with a 4.3-liter, V-6 engine. The engine was hard on gas and lacked power. I used this pickup to pull a 16-ft. cattle trailer empty about 50 miles to my son’s place. However, if I drove up any slope at all I had to shift down to second gear and could go only about 30 mph. It was a poor excuse for a truck.”

Bobby Theobald, Boaz, Ky.: “My 2013 **Badland** 12,000-lb. winch is my worst buy. The brace plate isn’t built strong enough. It bent when pulling a load, and the cable gets tangled up around the spool.”

Dick Clevenger, Letts, Iowa: “I spent about a year looking at different mowers before I bought my 2012 **Country Clipper** Jazee Pro 52-in. riding mower,” says Dick. “This mower does a great job and dealer service has been great.

“The mower that it replaced – a 1977 **Toro** Groundsmaster – was also a best buy. It still runs and works good, but most parts on it are no longer available. The machine’s systems are getting worn and sloppy, but it’s still a decent backup for us. If they still made this model I’d buy another one in a heartbeat.”

John G. Ruff, Logan, Kan.: “Back in the mid 1970’s I bought a used **Century** heavy duty, 295-amp arc welder. It was an earlier model with 3 different arc level settings and was only an AC welder. Several years later I replaced it with a DC welder that had 2 different arc level settings. I put the DC converter box on it a few years later but never installed a high frequency converter box.

“I used this welder a lot for repair work and for building things. Of all the equipment I’ve bought over the years, nothing has saved me more money than this welder. All I do is plug it in and turn the switch on. It came with a 20-year warranty – 5 years for continuous welding. I’ve had to replace the ground clamp and the electrode holder a few times, and a few years ago I finally had to replace the cables. They still worked, but I didn’t think they were safe to use any more.

“The only other repair I’ve made to the welder was to replace the main switch and one bolt. I wrote to the company telling them I had bought the welder used, and asked them to send me a bill for the new switch. I got the switch but never got the bill, and I know this welder was more than 20 years old at the time.

“The only limitation is that I have to be near a 220-volt outlet to use the welder, but that’s hardly ever a problem. Instead I just bring whatever I’m welding to the welder. Inconvenient, yes, but cheaper than hiring someone to do the welding for me.”

Wayne LeClair, Frankestown, N.H.: “My 2001 **Massey Ferguson** 6255 tractor with cab has only about 950 hours on it but has had a lot of electronic malfunctions. The dealer seems unable to repair them. The company knows its Autotronic computer system has design problems but has done nothing about it. My **Deere** 6420 tractor is far more reliable. No more Massey Fergusons for me.”

Steven Williams, Aluma Systems, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia: Steven is really impressed with **IBIX** blaster/cleaners from Stone Tucker Instruments. He says his crews have been using the small portable systems

automated message machine. Finally I talked to someone who put me on hold, and then I was transferred back to the same automatic message machine. The next day I called the company three different times but could only get the same message machine. This company doesn’t want to talk to the customer once you’ve purchased their product.”

Slade Hartranft, Richland, Penn.: “I like my **DeWalt** cordless 1/2-in. impact wrench equipped with a 20-volt battery. Works great for changing flat tires in the back 40—I just grab it and go. I use this wrench all the time in my shop, too. It’s advertised to deliver 300 ft./lbs. of torque. I was shocked at what this tool can do. Also, the battery lasts a long time.”

On the minus side, “My 2008 **Meyer** 8500 manure spreader worked great at first—I could run anything through it. However, as the years went by so did the number of bags of shear bolts I had to buy. I even had to drill out the holes and buy bigger shear bolts. Time for a new spreader.”

Allen Kenning, California, Mo.: Allen’s the satisfied owner of an **Exmark** Pioneer S series zero turn riding mower. “It has a top speed of 8 mph. It used to take me more than 4 hours to mow my yard, but now it takes only 1 1/2 hours. The mower comes with a ROPS, a seat belt, and a seat with arm rests which makes it comfortable to drive.”

Jim Muhs, Claremont, Ill.: Jim likes his 2002 **Ford** F-250 pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter diesel engine. “I use this pickup to tow my antique Oliver tractors on a gooseneck trailer, and it has never let me down. It rides good and has a lot of power. It’ll probably outlast me.”

Bonnie Hudick, Grayling, Mich.: “After cutting down more than 100 trees on my property, I used my 2011 **DR** stump grinder