

(Continued from previous page)

"The **Warn** winch on my 2005 Honda ATV is my worst buy. The cable pulled over the side of the drum, rendering the winch useless and leaving 30 ft. of cable laying out which broke the main shaft across the winch. I got that problem fixed, but then the next time I used the winch the cable wrapped around the gun rack.

"I use my 1986 **Honda** 250 2 by 4 Fourtrax for hunting and trail riding. This machine has been trouble-free and works unbelievably well. I sold it in 2005 for the same money I paid for it and bought a 2005 **Honda** 500 4 by 4 Foreman. The Foreman is carrying on where the other one left off and just keeps on running. It burns about a third as much fuel as a Polaris of the same size. It's a great machine."

Harmon Lindesmith, Waurika, Okla.: "It's the best mower I've owned in many years," says Harmon about his 2008 **Cub Cadet** zero turn riding mower equipped with a 22 hp Kawasaki engine and 50-in. deck. "It cuts even and fast. No problems.

"I'm well pleased with my 2008 **Hyundai** Vericruz SUV. It has good heat and air. I like having central air conditioning in the roof and independent controls for the back seat. It gets 25 mpg on the highway."

David Martin, Hamlin, N.Y.: David nominates his 2009 **Woods** DS1260 rotary mower as his "best buy." "The company has

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always built good mowers and this is the third one I've owned in the last 20 years. It has heavier gearboxes and is much heavier than the others. I'm well pleased with it."

Mark Yax, Solon, Ohio: "I've always liked **Briggs & Stratton** engines and have a lot of them working on my farm. Recently I found a use for an old engine that was laying around our barn for about 25 years. It was a 1965 2 hp model. I checked to see if the engine still had a spark and it did, so I added gas and to my surprise it started on the second pull. Not bad for a 44-year-old engine. I swear by the Briggs & Stratton brand."

Phillip Matthews, Laingsburg, Mich.: Phillip bought an **Anderson** Hybrid round bale wrapper four years ago and a **New Holland** 7060 Silage Special baler equipped with Roto Cut two years ago. He's happy with both of them. "The bale wrapper has saved me from losing hay cutting after hay cutting and results in a much better feed. We try to wrap bales that have 20 to 30 percent moisture, which makes great hay. I can't build a barn for what it costs to wrap our bales.

"The **New Holland** 7060 baler has a lot of capacity and makes firm bales. I couldn't live without the Roto Cut feature. It cuts the hay just enough so the bales pack tighter, and so that when they're opened they tend to fall apart nicely for feeding."

Donald Wilson, Auburn, N.Y.: Donald's the satisfied owner of a 2008 **Deere** 2520 4-WD compact diesel tractor equipped with a front-end loader and 62-in. drive-over mower deck. "This tractor and mower combination has reduced my mowing time by half, compared to when I used my old Wheelhorse 16 hp lawn tractor with a 48-in. deck. With the loader and 4-WD this tractor can do a lot more work than you'd expect. And it doesn't burn much fuel."

Mike Barber, S. Lyon, Mich.: Mike's disappointed with his **Stihl** 310 chainsaw

equipped with a 16-in. bar. "After two years of occasional use the saw wouldn't start. I took it back to the dealer, who said I was using bad fuel. He charged me for a rebuilt 'Intellicarb.' I took the saw home but it wouldn't start so I took it back to the dealer, and this time he installed a new 'Intellicarb.' I was able to start the saw at the store. However, the dealer wouldn't give me credit for the rebuilt carburetor, and he wanted me to pay for the new carburetor or else he said he'd remove it. After all was said and done, I spent \$600 to repair a \$400 saw."

Lawrence Shaw, Bushkill, Penn.: Lawrence is happy with his 2002 **Deere** 790 4-WD tractor equipped with a front-end loader and backhoe. "This tractor is a real workhorse for its size. We use it for loader work, spreading stones and dirt, picking up firewood, and so forth. No problems.

"In 2001 I bought a new **Chevy** K 2500 pickup equipped with a heavy duty snowplow, and the pickup was nothing but trouble. The fan clutch had to be replaced due to overheating and it had a lot of electrical problems. Finally, when the muffler baffle broke at 14,000 miles, I had enough and got rid of it. I'm glad I kept my **Ford** F-150 pickup."

John M. Beech, Chatom, Ala.: John's impressed with his **Northern Tool** chainsaw sharpener (ph 800 221-0516; www.northern-tool.com). "This tool comes with three grinding wheels and can sharpen most chains to a razor sharp edge. I have three saws on my farm and used to dread sharpening the chains. Now it's a fun job.

"My 2008 **Dodge** diesel Megacab dually pickup is a worst buy. The engine stops whenever there's a rain shower. The problem started after I took the pickup in for a recall at about 20,000 miles. The engine stopped 6 different times, and three of them happened while I was pulling a trailer. The pickup has been in the shop 6 times for this problem. It has gone through two computer replacements and four 'check engine' light resets, but it still doesn't work right. This is my first Dodge pickup, and it'll be my last, too."

Michael J. Burrow, Yellville, Ark.: "My **Stihl** 16-in. chainsaw is my best buy. I bought it early last year to take care of down timber caused by an ice storm. My old Poulan chainsaw had died from overwork. I paid more for the Stihl model than I've ever paid for a chainsaw and even spent an extra \$30 for a 'soft start' feature. I use this saw hard but it has never failed to start, and it's easy to fill with gas and chain oil. Also, replacing chains is an easy job."

Glen Damin, St. Johnsville, N.Y.: "It's handy to use and has a lot of power for its size," says Glen, pleased with his 2009 **Case IH** Farmall 95 4-WD tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "This tractor starts easy,

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even in cold weather, and has great traction. The only downside is there's a problem with the 1,000 rpm pto, which needs to be addressed by the company."

George Jordan, Winterport, Maine: "I like my 1999 **New Holland** 1920 loader tractor. I've used it so much that I've worn the bucket off the loader, but after 2,700 hours this tractor has been virtually trouble-free. Only the water pump has been replaced.

"My 2004 **Boss** 9-ft. 2-in. V-snowplow is my worst buy. After one year of use the plow

had to be rebuilt, but it still was no good at all. The work was done under warranty, but I never could depend on this plow when it snowed."

Rex Hollar, Scranton, Kan.: Rex is pleased with his 2007 **Vermeer** TM 700 disc mower and 2008 **Vermeer** WR 22 wheel rake. "We had to make some changes to our hay operation so I turned to my Vermeer dealer. After using the disc mower for a month I wished we had bought it sooner. Then getting the wheel rake just made it a sweeter deal for our big baler. These machines have been reliable and are real time savers.

"Over the years we've used our **Vermeer** 504 Super I round baler to make several thousand bales, and it has required only routine maintenance. We take the baler back to the dealer every winter to have it checked over, which lets us keep going without having to stop for repairs during the busy hay season."

Dave Lizotte, Norwell, Mass.: Dave's happy with his 2003 **GM** 2500 HD 4-WD pickup equipped with an 8.1-liter gas engine and 5-speed Allison transmission. "This pickup has a lot of power and runs smooth. It's totally reliable no matter what the job. Also, it's not as tall and bulky as some of the newer trucks."

Steve Hall, Lewistown, Mont.: "I like my 1998 **Valtra** Valmet 900 4-WD tractor equipped with a front-end loader. We use it every day on our cow-calf operation and it now has more than 10,000 hours on it. We use the tractor to grind feed and to maintain more than 300 acres of hay ground. It's easy on fuel and has required only a few minor repairs. It has the best workmanship of any tractor I've seen lately."

Eli E. Mast, Jr., Camden, Wyo.: "My **Caterpillar** skid loader equipped with rubber tracks is a versatile and powerful machine. I wouldn't want to farm without it."

Benjamin Beiler, Christiana, Penn.: "I like **Proactive Technology** P2000 insulation (ph 888 262-4497; www.p2000insulation.com). It's a specially formulated polystyrene panel with metalized plastic facers that you can use to insulate truck cabs. A local trucker used it in his cab and said it made a big difference during the winter. The snow didn't melt outside the cab where he had installed the 3/8-in. thick P2000 insulation, and in summer it stayed cooler inside."

Dan Littrol, Chadron, Neb.: Dan likes his **Hydrabed** HB200 pickup-mounted bale bed (ph 785 284-3674; www.triple-c-inc.com). "We have a 300-head cow-calf operation and use the bale bed every day to feed cattle. At other times we use the extra hydraulic valve to operate dump trailers, fence winders, and so forth.

"My 2006 **Ford** F-450 pickup equipped with a 6.0-liter diesel engine and 5-speed transmission is my worst buy. This truck goes through fuel injectors every five months or so and has no power whatsoever. A few weeks after I bought it I got a survey form from Ford wanting to know how I liked this pickup. I filled out the form, listing the problems, but never heard back from the company. Finally I gave up on the Ford and bought a **Dodge** 4500 diesel pickup."

D. Duane Esarey, Yoder, Colo.: "I like my 2009 **Deere** CX Gator. Although I'm not a Deere fan, being partial to the red paint of a Massey, we decided to buy the Gator. It's only a 2-WD model but it does a good job of plowing snow and gets me around our ranch very well without tire chains. We're well pleased with it."

Dwayne Oxford, Holladay, Tenn.: "Our worst buy is a latex acrylic roof coating sold by the **St. Louis Paint Mfg. Co.** I used it on the roof of my trailer. It looked real good for

a while and the white color did help keep the trailer cooler. Soon, though, it began cracking, peeling and curling up, and it was impossible to recoat. Finally I just built another gable roof over the trailer.

"Now I stick with '**Cool Seal**'-type asphalt-base roof coatings. They're not as good at cooling, but they gradually weather off without cracking and peeling and it's no problem to recoat them, no matter how long you go between coats.

"My best buy is a rust converter called '**1 Step**' sold by Interstate Products, Inc. (ph 800 474-7294; www.interstateproducts.com). It actually converts rust into a protective paintable surface, which maintains its integrity even if you don't soon paint over it. It also has a long shelf life, especially if it's kept from freezing. It sells for \$42.95 per gal. plus S&H; larger quantities cost less."

Barry Williams, Humboldt, Ill.: "My 2008 **Kubota** B7800 loader tractor is my best buy. I use it with a belly mower to mow about a half acre of woods and also to blade snow and move dirt. It always starts, even below zero.

"We had to do a lot of re-landscaping work last year and this tractor saved me a lot of back problems. We also use it when we cut firewood."

On the negative side, he lists his 2007 **Sears Craftsman** self-powered key start riding mower.

"It's too heavy and doesn't do a good job of lifting and cutting the grass. Also, the bag isn't big enough. I ended up repairing our old **Ahrens** push mower. It cuts better and holds more clippings and is generally a much better mower."

Charles Diller, Dillsburg, Penn.: Charles likes his **Stihl** MS 192 chainsaw equipped with a 14-in. bar. "This saw cuts great and starts easy, and it weighs only 8 lbs. so it doesn't tire me out. I use it only to cut small diameter wood.

"My **Maytag** top load washer is my worst buy. I used it less than two years before I had to have a service man replace the plastic agitator gear. Now 8 months later the agitator gear is going out again. The problem is poor engineering."

Howard Younger, Fort Lupton, Colo.: "This pickup just keeps on running," says Howard about his 1993 **Ford** F-150 4-WD model. "It has about 60,000 miles on it yet the transmission, alternator and starter are all original. The engine never uses more than a half quart of oil between oil changes."

Milan Pelton, Burton, Ohio: Milan's disappointed with his **Edenpure** heater. "I used it two years and liked it but unfortunately at the start of this heating season it quit working. I took it back to the dealer, but they told me it was out of warranty and would cost \$112 to fix. I paid \$400 for the heater. I told them to keep it and then bought a **Lasco** Tower Heater for less than \$50 (ph 800 233-0268; www.laskoproducts.com). It works great."

Audrey Hill, Lund, B.C.: Audrey's happy with **NiteGuard** anti-predator lights (ph 800 328-6647; www.NiteGuard.com). It's a solar-powered, flashing red light that turns on and off automatically each night and morning,



re-peling night predators. Nite Guard mimics the "eye" of another animal that could harm these predators. They feel threatened and leave the area. However, domestic animals and pets aren't affected. It's designed to work on predators such as raccoons, possums, foxes,