

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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"Three years ago we bought a **Hitachi** 45,000-lb. track hoe excavator which is our best buy. It has had very few breakdowns and is easy to operate. We use it to do our own excavation work and to clean corrals, and also for custom work within a 100-mile radius. We excavate 24-ft. deep wells, basements, water diversions, watering holes for cattle, trenches, and to do building demolition work, etc. We use a variety of buckets with it, from 32-in. digging buckets to 60-in. cleanup buckets. Because of the sizes of the buckets and the 360 degree rotation, this rig works 5 to 10 times as fast as a rubber tired backhoe. It's also very maneuverable."

Jerre W. Grube, Manheim, Pa.: "My **Deere** F525 front-mount mower is easy to operate, requires little maintenance, and has a lot of power. It makes a nice, even cut but could use a differential lock for more traction on hills and wet grass."

"My **Black & Decker** Nakelight flexible flashlight is my worst buy. The light is flexible so that it can be wrapped around or hung on objects. However, it's poorly balanced and the neck doesn't stay bent the way it should. Also, the batteries never seem to last very long."

George Holmes, Trumansburg, N.Y.: "My **Brillion** Land Commander and **Brillion** floating ring packer tillage rigs are both best buys. Last year we went over our land with this combination and planted both corn and soybeans. They did a good job of pushing the stones down into the ground before we planted soybeans. Our 150 hp tractor can easily pull it."

"My worst buy is my **Kewanee** 21-ft. 1175 disk. We have a lot of rocks and, unfortunately, this disk can't stand up to them. It's a rock flex disk but the axles still keep breaking."

H.J. Breukeman, Thunder Bay, Ontario: "I've owned four different vans over the years but this one is by far the best," says H.J. about his 1996 **Ford** Windstar van. "It has more than 85,000 miles on it and still has the original brakes and Michelin tires. I changed the spark plugs for the first time at about 70,000 miles. It's easy on fuel, runs quiet, and rides nice. I plan to buy another one."

Victor Engel, McMahan, Sask.: Victor nominates his 1996 **Freightliner** tandem axle grain truck as his "worst buy". "The piston-type compressor that operates the air conditioner ruined the seals in less than a year. The company replaced numerous seals and units when the truck was still under warranty. I was finally able to get them to install an improved compressor at a cost of more than \$200."

John M. Jackson, Bucksport, Maine: John's had good luck with his 1992 **Belarus** 825 tractor which he bought used with 520 hours on it. "It starts right up, is fuel efficient, has a great view from the cab, and is comfortable to operate. My only complaint is that it leaks a little hydraulic oil."

Josh Renaker, Cynthia, Ky.: "I like my 1999 **Yamaha** Bear Tracker 4-wheeler ATV equipped with a 250 cc engine. It's powerful enough to pull a grain wagon loaded half full."

Kenneth R. Murphy, Quarryville, Pa.: "My 1999 **New Holland** 1431 discbine does everything the dealer said it would. It doesn't require nearly as much upkeep as our old

sicklebar mower equipped with knives and guards."

"My **Case-IH** 8420 small round baler makes bales that are just the right size for feeding in our stanchion barn. We use a skid steer loader to handle the bales in the field and to stack them in the barn, where we later feed them by hand. We just unroll the bales down a trough in front of the cows."

Steven Vaadi, Lafargeville, N.Y.: "I like my 1998 **Sears** 3/8-in., 7.2-volt reversible cordless drill and driver. I also like my 1998 **Makita** 4-in. electric hand grinder. No problems with either tool."

Duane Riddle, Rochester, Ind.: Duane says his **Bergman** Agri-Speed automatic wagon hitch is his "best buy" (Bergman Mfg., Inc., Box 82, Arthur, Iowa 51431 ph 800 551-4554 or 712 675-4733). The hitch mounts on your tractor's drawbar and implement tongue and lets you hook up to any wagon or trailer without getting out of the tractor cab. "I read about this hitch in FARM SHOW (Vol. 16, No. 2). It's the beefiest, heaviest-built piece of farm equipment we've ever bought. It has worked every bit as good

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as the company said it would and has even exceeded my expectations."

Ronald Sherrill, Riceville, Tenn.: "I'm well pleased with my 1990 **Chevrolet** Silverado 2-WD extended cab 1/2-ton pickup. It has more than 218,000 miles on it and has had fewer problems than any vehicle I've ever owned. It's equipped with a 5.7-liter engine that consistently gets 18 mpg. It handles and drives as well as my 1997 model."

"My 1991 **Ford** 3930 is basically a good tractor but nevertheless could use a few improvements. It has only about 1,800 hours on it but I've already had to replace the front wheel bearings and steering bushings twice. I also had to repair the 3-pt. lift mechanism. The company should increase the size of the front wheel bearings on this tractor and also improve the lift mechanism."

Larry Helgeson, Rose Creek, Minn.: Larry likes his 1999 **Case-IH** 75XT skid steer loader. "The heater could be improved, but all in all it's a well-engineered machine. It has an excellent engine and the controls are smooth and easy to operate. It has 650 hours on it. We're well pleased with it."

On the negative side, he lists his 1992 **Gehl** 315 Scavenger manure spreader. "When these spreaders first came out they put a no. 100 roller chain on the drive on the main auger. Then they decided that a no. 80 chain would do. The no. 80 chain works okay if you're hauling only slurry. However, whenever we used it to haul pen-packed manure the chain almost always broke. We finally traded the spreader in. I understand that the company has now gone back to using a heavier chain again."

Delbert Graham, Vulcan, Alberta: "I like my 1998 **Chevrolet** Silverado 1500 extended cab pickup. No problems. I follow the company's service schedule which helps a lot. It has more than 40,000 miles on it."

"I use my 1998 **Deere** 6200 tractor for doing loader work. I had to replace the pto

switch soon after I bought it, but otherwise it's been trouble-free."

"My **Deere** 4455 MFWD tractor has almost 2,000 hours and has worked perfect."

Robert Phillips, Brighton, Ontario: "My **Central Boiler** outdoor wood stove burns almost anything (Central Boiler, Greenbush, Minn. ph 800 248-4681). I use it to heat two houses and a shop, including the hot water. Even in the coldest weather, both houses stay warm. I've used it for 1 1/2 years now and the only maintenance I have to do is clean out the ashes. I really like it."

Murray J. Musselman, Gowanstown, Ontario: Murray likes his 60-ft. wide by 104-ft. long **Calhoun** Super Structure building (Calhoun Agri Services, Ltd., Rt. 2, Chesley, Ontario, Canada ph 800 265-3994 or 519 363-3037). "We bought it in April 1998 and use it to store equipment. It looks good so far. It's made from polyethylene fabric over a heavy duty, 13 ga. structural steel tubing frame. The long-life fabric contains ultra-violet ray blockers. We like how it lets in a lot of light in the back corners."

Vern Nelson, Prairie Farm, Wis.: Vern nominates his 1997 **Ford** F-350 pickup equipped with a Powerstroke diesel engine as his "best buy". "It has an excellent ride, a lot of power, and is easy on fuel. This is the first pickup we've had with an automatic transmission. We sure like it."

Harlin Kannenberg, Jackson, Wis.: "I've used my **Echo** chainsaw for a number of years with very few problems. It always starts and it runs good."

Joe Costello, Andover, N.Y.: "My 1997 **Deere** 6 by 4 Gator has been absolutely trouble-free and is my best buy. It starts the first time, every time, no matter how cold the weather is. It's the perfect machine for getting in and out of a woodlot to cut firewood, especially in wet conditions. It'll haul a half face cord of wood at a time."

"My 1999 **New Holland** 1920 4-WD tractor equipped with a **Great Bend** front-end loader is a best buy. It's a real workhorse for its size. The 12 by 12 transmission was well worth the extra cost."

"My 1995 **Ford** F-150 4-WD pickup equipped with a 300 cu. in. 6-cyl. engine and a 5-speed transmission is a best buy. It's a very reliable truck. The only problem I've had is with the cheaply-built oil pan. At 57,000 miles, the threads are bad so it will have to be replaced."

"My three **Husqvarna** chainsaws - models 51, 254, and 268 - are also best buys. They've never let me down."

Stan Schmidt, Homestead, Iowa: "I'm well pleased with my 1999 **Kinze** 2000 6-row planter equipped with interplant row units and dry fertilizer boxes. It's a dependable planter and places seed accurately. I really like the brush meters which are used to plant soybeans. I also like being able to plant in 15-in. rows."

Mike Nelson, Montville, N.J.: "My 1994 **Chevrolet** pickup equipped with a 6.5-liter turbocharged diesel engine is a worst buy. It caused me a lot of headaches and more money spent on repairs than I care to total up. I had to replace the throttle control, computer, and fuel injection pump. The injection pump is made by Stanadyne. At about 108,000 miles the injection pump went bad again. The company only guarantees the pump for 12,000 miles or one year. I decided it wasn't worth it to replace the pump again so I got rid of the pickup. Next time I'll buy

a Dodge. No more Chevy diesels for me."

Donald Popp, Sellersburg, Ind.: "My **Allis-Chalmers** 185 and 175 tractors are fun to operate and easy to work on."

"Anyone want to buy a **Yetter** Weight Transfer Hitch System? I bought this item new and have never used it. I've been trying to sell it, trade it, or give it away ever since I bought it, but I can't find anyone who's interested."

Larry Wehr, Sigourney, Iowa: "We have two **International** 1466 tractors and they both will pull circles around our 1066 model. Both 1466's start great."

Lenox Russell, New Tazewell, Tenn.: "It cuts clean and saves a lot of time," says Lenox, satisfied with his 1999 **Krone** 9-ft. 2-in. disc mower.

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1999 **Deere** 566 baler. "I was very dissatisfied with the company. The baler was shipped with a bad bale diameter sensor and tension cylinder. The company said it was my fault, but the dealer stopped listening to the company and fixed the problem himself."

Allan Reinhard, Bucyrus, Ohio: "My 1998 **New Holland** 8870 tractor has a lot of power, is easy on fuel, handles well, and has a comfortable ride. No problems."

Ronald Young, Eau Claire, Wis.: "In 1999 I bought a new 1999 **Sierra** fifth wheel RV trailer from Forest River. In all of my 62 years it's by far the worst buy I've ever made. It had almost none of the equipment the dealer said it would have. All the pipes leaked, the bathroom door didn't work, and a lot of the trim fell off. It leaks all over, the cupboard top and table top had bumps and cracks, and the floor had nails and staples coming up all over. The jacks quit working after the third time I used the rig. Many other things also went wrong."

"I'm now in a 10-month long battle to get

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it repaired and have hired an attorney to represent me. I also contacted the Bureau of Consumer Protection and have written my state senator and representative. But I'm still stuck with a leaky, unfit trailer. I bought it so that we can go to Arizona every winter. However, last winter we didn't go because of all the trouble we had with it the previous winter. What a way to enjoy my retirement."

Richard Jaescke, Northampton, Ma.: "Our 1998 **Twose** 520 mower is our best buy. It's a 3-pt. mounted over-the-guardrail mower. It's built rugged and has a lot of good features like a belt-driven rotor. I recommend it highly for commercial roadside mowing."

"My worst buy in recent years is my 1992 **Ford** F-350 1-ton dump truck. After about 40,000 miles, the rear end completely disintegrated. We think the sending unit for the ABS braking system came loose from the housing inside which allowed small pieces of steel to get into the bearings. Also, the bolts that held the pinion in place were loose and fell out."

Richard L. Hudson, Smyrna, Delaware: "My 1998 **Chevrolet** 1500 4-WD pickup has