

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

Continued from previous page

That's where hundreds of tiny slices are made across the threads, increasing traction.

"I've already gone through one and a half winters on the new tires and I couldn't be happier. Traction and handling are noticeably better than on the original tires and the tread appears to be wearing evenly."

Arvid Narhi, Pelkie, Mich.: "I bought a stainless steel shovel after reading about them in FARM SHOW's Vol. 26, No. 5 issue. I

"Traction and handling are noticeably better than on the original tires."

was tired of the way manure sticks to a regular shovel. Unfortunately, although this shovel is a little more slippery than a regular shovel, manure still sticks to it.

"The people who sell them make it sound like anything would slide right off. Maybe it works better in mud, which is how they were using it.

"I called the company and they said they would refund my money except for shipping."

Elmer M. Pinkerton, Elmwood, Neb.: "My worst buy is a handicap van we bought. Brand name doesn't really matter because I think they're all pretty much the same. They cut out the center and lowered the floor 10 in. This leaves it about 6 in. from the ground. That might be okay but they still have the exhaust pipe running under the floor and that makes it impossible to drive over speed bumps without dragging. Breaking the pipe could break the manifold. After my wife died, I got rid of that lemon fast. There must be better solutions for handicapped people to get around."

Larry Funk, Clearwater, Neb.: "'Aim' herbicide from FMC came packaged in quart bottles. However, the majority of them had only 28 oz. in them instead of 32 oz. The company would not believe us until we proved it to them. When they sent out replacement bottles, they also had only 28 oz. in them."

Robert Kesinger, Roaring Spring, Penn.: "In the spring of 1956, my parents bought our family a 15 cu. ft. International Harvester refrigerator and it has been in almost continuous use ever since. At the same time they also bought an IH freezer and it's still running, too. They've only been moved once in all those years."

Leon Allison, Doylestown, Ohio: "My 1940's Deere Van Brunt 9-ft. grain drill is my best buy of all time. I bought it used about 15 years ago at an auction for \$50. It's equipped with 13 disc openers. I use it every year to plant about 10 acres of oats, wheat and soybeans. My only expense over the years has been for grease. It works great on a small farm like mine.

"I'm pleased with my 2001 DR field and brush mower powered by a 15 hp electric start gas engine. The first time we used it the deck froze up. However, it didn't take long to solve the problem - one phone call and two days later the replacement deck was delivered. It does a great job mowing brush in wooded areas and along road ditches where a Bush Hog can't go.

"My 1997 GMC Sierra extended cab pickup is a best buy. The only time it was in the shop was for a problem with a sensor in the steering system. I considered trading the pickup in for a new one, but I didn't because I haven't seen any other models that I like better. Another factor was that this pickup has

only about 50,000 miles on it."

Gregg Zillges, Oshkosh, Wis.: "It's a little hard on fuel, but it's a nice size pickup - not too big and not too small," says Gregg about his 1991 Dodge Dakota extended cab 4-WD powered by a V-6 engine. "I bought it used and haven't had to spend a lot of money on repairs. It's easy to get around with and pulls my 24-ft. boat with no problems. It always starts in cold weather."

On the minus side, he's had problems with a Tecumseh 5 hp Power Sport engine. "How much money can you justify spending for repairs on a \$200 engine? I don't think I should have to spend anything on a new engine."

Gary Anderson, Bowden, Alberta: In 1983, Gary bought a 1980 Deere 4440 tractor used with 1,200 hours on it. "This tractor now has almost 8,000 hours on it but has required only minimal repairs, and the engine still doesn't use a drop of oil. Even though I do a lot of loader work with this tractor it still has the original clutch. Looks and performs like new.

"My 1993 New Holland 415 discbine is my worst buy. It worked well for two years, covering a total of about 700 acres. Then the same splines in the transmission gearbox sheared off. We got it fixed and two hundred acres later the same problem happened again. The machine was still under warranty so the company paid for it again. One hundred acres later the same shaft failed a third time. Every time this problem happened we lost about a week of downtime. We finally traded the machine in for a Deere 935 discbine, which has worked a total of about 3,000 acres and still works perfectly."

Richard Hines, South Charleston, Ohio: "My 2001 Deere 4 by 2 Gator is a real work saver. I use it to haul seed, chemicals, garden supplies, plants and firewood. My wife uses it almost as much as I do. It has been trouble-free. We bought the machine equipped with an optional dump bed which makes it even more useful."

Ivan L. High, Gorin, Mo.: "I bought a Massey Ferguson 275 tractor in 1980 which is one of my best buys ever. This tractor has averaged 100 hours per year and now has about 2,400 hours on it. I haven't had a bit of trouble with it."

Cliff Fivecoat, Boise, Idaho: "It starts easy and just keeps on running," says Cliff about his "best buy" 1972 Deere 2030 tractor. "I bought this tractor used when it was three years old. I've used it for both light and heavy duty work, such as harrowing, baling, plowing with a 2-bottom plow, and pulling a 12-ft. offset disk. It now has almost 11,000 hours on it but is still going strong."

Jackson Elliott, Aurora, Oregon: Jackson's the satisfied owner of a 2001 Deere 790 compact tractor equipped with a Great Bend 260 front-end loader that has a quick attach bucket and forks. "This tractor has about 40 trouble-free hours on it and is the perfect size for my 2 1/2 acres. My only wish is that it had rear hydraulic outlets.

"My Harbor Freight 4-in. grinder is my worst buy. I tried to use it to cut some 1-in. dia. steel pipe but it stalled out whenever I applied even moderate pressure. This tool works great for grinding flat surfaces, but not for cutting."

William J. Dietrich, Sr., Goodfield, Ill.: "The Goodyear tires on my earthmover are worst buy. The tires started cracking one fall only about three months after they were installed. Three years later the tires were cracked so bad I could see the cords. Our 4-WD tractor also had Goodyear radial tires on it. The front tires became severely damaged by crop stubble. Rather than rotate the front tires back and move the rear tires forward,

we sold the tires and put Firestone tires on all the way around.

"The Firestone 30.5/32 3 Star radials I use on my liquid manure spreader are my best buy. These tires are much flatter across the tread width than bias ply tires, which is important when hauling heavy loads. It provides a much larger footprint which reduces soil compaction."

Bron Wentzel, Watertown, Wis.: "My best buy is Royal plastic decking which I bought from a local lumber supplier. I used it on an 8 by 22-ft. porch that we added to our home because I wanted the porch to be maintenance-free like the rest of the house. The decking was easy to put together and is holding up well. It comes in two pieces, with a structural bottom that screws down and a non-slip top that locks in."

Alex H. Allan, Riviere Qui Barre, Alberta: A 1996 MTD 42-in. riding mower equipped with a 42-in. deck and 2-cyl. engine rates as Alex's "best buy". "It has performed well and has gone through only one set of blades and two belts, even though we've used it on rough land with novice operators.

"My Homelite string trimmer and 14-in. chain saw are both best buys. They're both user friendly and have provided trouble-free service over many years. Also, they're reasonably priced."

Jeff Smith, Aspermont, Texas: Jeff likes the two Hoelscher bale forks that he uses on a pair of Deere 4020 tractors equipped with Deere 148 front-end loaders. "I use one fork in the field and one at the barn. A hired man operates the loader tractors and another man drives a pickup that pulls a hay trailer. I operate the baler. We use a Hoelscher 100 small square bale accumulator in the field, which is also a best buy. With this system we've been able to put up more than 3,000 bales in the barn in just one day without ever touching a bale. This is the best hay making machinery I've ever used."

Ray Swank, Christmas Valley, Oregon: "My 1999 Dodge Ram 4-WD pickup powered by a diesel engine is my worst buy. Within the first month the brakes failed. They got so bad that they would apply themselves. I had to battle for almost three years before I could get the braking system repaired. One dealer sent me home with no brakes because I wouldn't agree to pay \$1,000 to fix them even though the brakes were still under warranty."

"The brakes got so bad they would apply themselves."

Randy D. Craig, Alexandria, Ky.: "My worst buy is the Porta-Power 10-ton hydraulic ram that I bought from Harbor Freight Tools. I was able to use it only twice before the hydraulic pump blew a seal. It's built very poorly. I guess you get what you pay for."

Douglas Kort, Lodi, Calif.: "My 1999 Ford 17 hp riding mower is my best buy. No problems. It cuts grass evenly, unlike some mowers that cut high on one side and low on the other."

Charles M. Hoyt, Medina, Ohio: "Twentyfive years ago I paid \$250 for a 1946 Ford 9N tractor, and it's absolutely still my best buy ever. I converted it to 12 volts and added a power steering pump that piggybacks off the alternator. This makes it easier to run my front-mounted snowplow. I also added a Sherman overdrive.

Dale Cramer, Hartville, Mo.: Dale nominates his 1999 Bobcat 753 skidsteer loader as a "best buy". He uses it with a Kansas

Clipper tree shear and grapple forks, which he says are also "best buys". "It's a great way to quickly clear trees up to 10 in. in diameter. The grapple forks make it easy to stack trees and brush and also work well with large bales of hay."

Joe Dustrude, Calhan, Colo.: "My New Holland 885 skid steer loader is my best buy. It's a joy to operate and really runs smooth. I've used four different New Holland skid loaders during the last 20 years and each one seems to work better than the one before it. I've operated Bobcat and Deere skid loaders on my job in town, but they can't compare to the New Holland model."

Jerry Utzinger, Grove City, Ohio: Jerry's pleased with his 1977 Versatile 500 4-WD tractor powered by a 200 hp Cummins diesel engine. "It'll outwork two Deere 4430 tractors and in my opinion is more reliable than any Deere around. I also use it in snow as a recreation vehicle. It's more fun to operate than a snowmobile."

"It'll outwork two Deere 4430 tractors."

Ruth N. Merja, Sun River, Montana: "I like my 1998 Kawasaki 500 Mule 4-wheeler. I use it almost every day for checking fences, feeding cows, gardening, irrigation work, and so on. I can drive it in mud and snow at temperatures down to 30 degrees below zero or up to 100 degrees above. I'd be lost without it."

Bob Johnson, Irvington, Ky.: Bob likes his Echo 452 VL chain saw. "I bought it used two years ago for \$40 and cleaned the spark plug and adjusted the carburetor. It has been running great ever since. This saw starts easy, idles good, and cuts fast. The money was well spent."

Doren Loehmer, Culver, Ind.: "The dry-wall jack I bought from Northern Hydraulics works great and is my best buy (ph 800 221-0516). It reaches up to 15 ft. so I can raise it to the ceiling and then fasten it in place. I was impressed when the company sent me an update for the cable parts - I didn't even have to call them to get the parts."

Darrell K. Burdee, Hazel Green, Ky.: Darrell says the 1998 Tecumseh HM-100 gas engine he bought for use on his home-built bandsaw sawmill is his "worst buy". "It starts very hard - the only way I can get it to start is by using Quick Start. It won't idle properly either. This engine has built-in compression relief which my dealer wasn't familiar with, so he wasn't much help. The engine has only about 40 hours on it, and I've spent at least another 40 hours just trying to get it to start. Everyone, including my dealer, says Tecumseh engines are hard to start. I plan to replace mine with a Briggs & Stratton or Honda."

Richard L. Woodard, Danville, Ill.: "My 1967 Cub Cadet 125 riding mower is my best buy. I bought it used in 1968 and have used it every year to mow my pasture and yard. It has been a trouble-free machine. It's powered by a 12 hp engine that has been overhauled once and is still going strong."

On the negative side, "My 2003 GM pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine is my worst buy ever. Over the years I've owned 12 different GM pickups, and they were all equipped with V-8 engines that were reasonably fuel efficient, averaging 19 to 20 mpg. However, the 6-cyl. engine on this pickup gets only about 12 mpg."

Elfie Johanson, Nevis, Minn.: Elfie's happy with a 1984 Allis Chalmers 916-H garden tractor. "I use it to mow my yard as