

"Owners Report" On Best, Worst Farm Lubricants

What's your favorite brand of motor oil? Why do you think your brand is best? What's the worst brand of oil you've tried? Do you think there's much difference between the major brands of motor oil? Have you tried any miracle additives in your oil? What brands of grease and hydraulic fluid do you use and why?

These are some of the questions we asked randomly-selected farmers in an effort to highlight those lubricants that perform with flying colors and to pinpoint the "lemons" that fail because of poor performance, or failure of the dealer or company to provide proper information or service.

Here's how the survey shaped up.

"As a mechanic in a GMC/Allis Chalmers dealership, we often see the results of poor engine oils. Multi-grades of some brands break down quickly, causing pressure loss. The worst engine oil is **Standard**. We can almost always tell if it's been used by the gray ash deposits we find in the engine pan and on heads from improper cleaning and breakdown," says Martin Sacks, Claypool, Ind. "I think the best brand of motor oil is **Shell**. It keeps engines clean, resulting in good engine bearing, cam, lifter, piston and ring life. Durability and pressure are consistently good. Regular oil changes at recommended intervals, along with the filter, are the key to good results with any oil or engine, however."

"The biggest differences between oils seems to be between single and multi viscosities, even in oils of the same brand. Because I've had trouble with premature breakdown of multi-viscosity oils, I've used straight 30 wt. oil for the past several years with no problems. I think there are some differences between major brands. For example, **Phillips** is a better cleaning oil while **Pennzoil** has less sulphur and provides better lubrication," says George Matthews, Moore, Okla. "I've sworn off all oil additives. I put B.G. Engine Oil Treatment in a previously good John Deere tractor and after 50 hrs. I had to replace all the bearings. Also, I think STP Oil Treatment sludges engines and restricts oilflow. If oils needed additives, I think the oil companies would recommend them."

Thomas Brown, Atwater, Ohio, uses synthetic oil. "I think synthetics provide the best lubrication. I use **Mobil 1** because it's the easiest to find. We tore a tractor down with 2,500 hrs. on it that had a bad piston from the factory. Aside from the piston, it showed almost no wear. In fact, machining marks from the factory still showed."

"We've used **Chevron** motor oil for over 30 years with no problem. It may not be the best but we have never had a reason to change," says John Richardson, Orofino, Idaho.

"I put a can of **STP Oil Treatment** in an oil-drinking combine motor on a hot day and near the end of the day, the motor threw a rod through the side of the block. I haven't tried additives since," says George C. Ruppel, Vincennes, Ind. "I use the best grade of **Mobil** oil in my diesel engines. It's the most widely available brand and we've had no problems."

Willis C. Hansen, Roy, Wash., uses **Quaker State**. "My cars and trucks regularly run 180,000 to 200,000 miles. I also like the price of the oil. However, I don't think there's much difference between major brands if you change oil regularly. As for oil additives, I froze up a piston once with **STP** but it does do wonders for noisy fan belts."

"We use 10-40 **Pennzoil** in our cars and pickups, which have over 100,000 miles on

them, along with **STP Oil Treatment**. In our diesel tractors, we use **John Deere** oil because the company recommends it," says Loren Pfau, Holyoke, Colo.

"I've never had to overhaul a tractor in the 30 years that I've used **Phillips 66** oil. And I've got 154,000 miles on a Chevrolet V-8 engine that still doesn't use any oil, even with a 6,000 mile oil change interval," says James L. Kruse, Colfax, Ill.

"Our best buy oil is **Unico Versatol**, the "house" brand from Southern States Coop. We use it for motor oil, hydraulic oil, gear oil, or whatever. We carry a jug on all the trucks so we're ready for any kind of lubri-

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cation problem. It's part synthetic. Since we've been using it, we've had fewer problems due to oil failure," says Rick Reeves, Mt. Solon, Virginia. "The worst brand of oil I've tried is **Quaker State Super Blend**. When changing oil in 20° weather, the oil wouldn't even pour out of the can. It had jelled."

"I've used **Cenex** brand oil for 20 years with no problems. In engine oil tests I've seen, it ranks right up at the top," says Verne Schlueter, Arlington, Minn.

Stephen Gardner, Ottumwa, Iowa says his favorite oil is **Schaeffer Moly Bond 200**. "It's got a paraffin base. Oil is all basically the same except for additives, such as detergent, and the variation of asphalt to paraffin. I also use **Schaeffer 248 Moly** grease. It's a water resistant and high temperature grease that out-performs any I have used. I tried **Slick 50** in a Honda ATV. We've used it every day for the past five years and the engine and transmission have never been opened."

"I've never had a major engine failure using **Delo 400** motor oil. My present Deere 4030 tractor has 4,600 hrs. and has never been to the shop for repairs. It uses just 2 qts. every 100 hrs. I also use this oil in a Deere 2510 tractor, a Deere 105 combine and a 1977 GMC 6000 truck," says Alvin Bell, Mt. Vernon, Wash.

"If availability and price were identical I would prefer **Kendall** oil but **Valvoline** is more readily available. Kendall keeps the hydraulic lifters quieter and doesn't seep out of the lifter bodies as easily," says L.R. Bauhard, Arcadia, Neb.

Charles Brague, Coleman, Mich., likes **Quaker State**. "I've used this brand for quite a number of years and it keeps engines clean with no gummy buildup."

"We use **Deere Torq Gard** in our diesels and **Valvoline** in our gas engines. Our cars and trucks run over 150,000 miles before they are traded and we have very few me-

chanical problems," says Jim Wood, Loma, Mont.

"I've got a 1983 Mitsubishi turbo diesel 4-WD pickup with 184,000 miles on it and the oil pan has never been off. It still has 70 lbs. oil pressure at 2,400 rpm's (it had 75 lbs. when new). I even pull fertilizer spreaders and nurse tanks with it. I still don't add any oil between 3,000 mile changes," says Ira F. Eichman, Westphalia, Kan., who gives the credit for his engine success to **Mobil 15-40** and **Slick 50**.

"General Motors makes an additive called **EOS** for cleaning hydraulic lifters that actually cleans tarnish off valve lifters and other parts. Works good," says Ron Beagle, Arrowwood, Alberta.

"Why is it we can send a man to the moon but we can't design a grease gun that works properly?" asks Warren King, Silverton, Ore. "I don't like any of the systems I've tried. All of them either get air in the gun which has to be worked out or allow the grease to pass behind the plunger, or both."

"**Phillips Trop-Artic 10-40** holds its body well and I have not had a motor bearing failure. I use it in two trucks, a pickup and a car as well as four tractors," says Homer Hatch, Burlington, Kan.

Ed Dremen, Mt. Sterling, Kent., likes 10-40 **Pennzoil**. "I've used it in two cars that ran 200,000 miles without using any oil."

Melvin Braulick, Jr., New Ulm, Minn., uses **Cenex** motor oil. "I like it because if anything goes wrong with an engine they will back it up if it's the oil's fault."

"I prefer oils from eastern states such as **Pennzoil** and **Quaker State** because they inherently have more of a paraffin base while oils from other parts of the world have more of an asphalt base. Paraffin base oils have a higher viscosity index than other oils and maintain quality at higher engine temperatures," says Bruce Klemm, Whitelaw, Wis. "My worst oil ever was 10-weight straight viscosity **Shell**. It has virtually no viscosity index at all and thins out like water. I almost burned out rod and main bearings."

Malcolm McGregor, Nashua, Iowa, has been happy with **Mobil Delvac** oil. "We've used it for 8 years and haven't had to overhaul any engines. We've got 10 tractors and 5 trucks. Three of the tractors are 5 years old and are used daily."

"If you buy oil with the right specs, you shouldn't have any problem. I've got two cars with 175,000 and 190,000 miles, as well as several tractors, that have given me trouble-free service. They all use **FS** motor oil," says Larry Knipper, Hopkinton, Iowa.

"I think there's a lot of difference between the major brands of oil due to the many additives companies can add. My 'best buy' oil is **Red Giant**. We've had almost no engine repair and this oil keeps all parts and the inside of the engine very clean. I also think **STP Oil Treatment** works good to stop oil consumption but I've found that once you start using it you have to keep using it or the motor will burn more oil than ever," says Ben Greene, Webb, Iowa.

Jerry Blessum, Rugby, N. Dak., names **Cenex** as his "best buy" in oil. "I've had good luck with performance and endurance. I've overhauled some engines after years of using this oil and the wear was minimal. I'm

also pleased with their grease and hydraulic fluids. I use **STP** as needed to quiet noisy lifters."

"I don't think there's much difference in motor oils as long as they have the same API ratings. However, I've had oils in the past that plugged filters with a coating of wax," says Leo Pritchard, Verona, N. Dak.

"I've had no lubrication failures with **Archer** oils. My worst experience with oils was when I tried **Schaeffers**. I was told I would get better engine life and lower fuel

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usage per hour. I ended up burning valves and using more fuel per hour," says Russell Rogotzke, Springfield, Minn.

"When I used **Pennzoil** in my car, the engine threw rod bearings out at just 80,000 miles. But I've used **Standard Super Permalube** for 30 years with great success on other gas engines."

"I used **Quaker State** in my first car. When I took the valve covers off the engine, it was all gummed up. A real mess. When I began farming in 1973, I realized the importance of good oil so I researched the lubrication industry and discovered that there are superior lubricants and inferior ones. I also found out that some companies spend a lot of time and money on research and quality control, while others are just in it to make a buck. Now I use **Farm-Oyl CD/SF**, as well as **Farm-Oyl** grease (I've had no bearing failures since I started injecting grease with a needle two years ago), and hydraulic fluid. These products have proven themselves in my 1979 Ford pickup with 121,000 miles on it, which uses less than a quart per 2,000 miles, and in my 1940 H Farmall which doesn't use any oil and runs great. I also have a Caterpillar, a Deutz tractor and three trucks," reports Bob Schmidt, Renville, Minn. He says he's never tried synthetic lubricants. "I can't see leaving a lubricant in my engine as long as they recommend. It's like doing dishes in the same water 4 times."

Jerry Schulz, Waubay, S. Dak., nominates **Conklin Convoys** as "worst buy". "In two different vehicles, the oil broke down and the valve lifters became extremely noisy. My favorite oil is **IH No. 1**, and **IH Interseason**. It has the best lubrication qualities, is the most durable and has the best components to neutralize acids. It's designed and tested for high-temperature operation. It gets a very good rating in engine manufacturer association's lubricating oils data book."

"Several of the engines in my older tractors and pickup have reduced their oil consumption by using **Shell Rotella T** oil. I also use **STP** in the tractor engines. I think it also helps cut oil consumption and I'll continue using it as long as the old tractors will run. I haven't tried synthetic oils in the engines but I use **Amsoil** in the pickup transmission and differential. I like the light viscosity during winter months," says Raymond Peterson, Elkhorn, Iowa.

"I like **Phillips Super HD 30**. I've used it