

knob, as well as the valve cover gasket. Also, the taillight assemblies won't stay inside the fenders. Another aggravating problem is that grass clippings accumulate on the tractor's screens and on the platform. Also, whenever I use high lift blades the mower leaves 1-in. wide uncut grass strips at each blade overlap.

"Mowing in wet conditions with this mower isn't possible because clippings immediately accumulate on the underside of the deck. Even in dry conditions, clippings have to be removed after each mowing. You have to raise the front end of the tractor with an overhead hoist and then use a putty knife to remove the caked-on clippings, a process that takes about 15 minutes. I expected better performance, quality and reliability in an \$8,000 machine."

Morris Hogard, Ontonagon, Mich.: A 2002 Makita cordless drill rates as Morris's "worst buy". "The main problem is that the

"I expected better performance, quality and reliability in an \$8,000 machine."

batteries have poor 'charge holding' capacity. Last spring I tried using it to tap 100 maple trees for sap. However, I was able to tap only about five trees before I had to change the batteries. I finally went back to using my 6-year-old Porter model so I could get the job done."

Robert L. Guelff, Glendive, Montana: "Our New Holland 2550 swather is a best buy. It cuts good and is easy to maintain. No problems."

Stanton E. Taylor, Willard, Ohio: "My all-time best buy is my early 1980's Homelite Super XL 20-in. chain saw. I use it to cut all my firewood and have worn out several chains and two bars so far. It has required only regular maintenance, a yearly spark plug change, and a new recoil starter rope. It's a super dependable saw."

"My 2000 Poulan 18-in. chain saw is my worst buy. I bought it as a backup light duty saw. However, most of its working life has been spent in the repair shop and repair costs have far surpassed the purchase price. Last year was its best year - it only broke down twice."

George Hubka, Dowling, Mich.: "My 1999 Ford Explorer is my worst buy. I bought it new, but it had three company recalls before it was even delivered to me and has had a lot of problems since then. The front brake slide pin froze, the rear oil seals had to be replaced, the electrical system has problems all the time, the front brakes squeal and can be heard a quarter mile away, a pin holding the hood padding poked a hole in the paint in the hood, and the rear wiper arm breaks easily. The rear axle has a 3.71 ratio which wastes a lot of fuel, and I can't get anything but local AM stations on the radio. Most of the time I just hear static engine noise on the speakers. Last but not least, this vehicle is equipped with those infamous Firestone tires."

Michael Cresanta, Pittsburgh, Penn.: "I'm sold on Goats Milk Soap sold by Eileen Whitten of Nanny Acres Farm (Box 176, Fort Assiniboine, Alberta, Canada T0G 1A0 ph 780 584-2210; email: nannyacres@telus.net). It was featured in FARM SHOW's Vol. 27, No. 3 issue. It's a truly luxurious product and makes a fine gift."

George Darby, Petersburg, Ky.: George is happy with his 1996 Taylor outside wood burning furnace. "As far as I'm concerned

it's the only way to burn wood. It doesn't make a mess in the house like an indoors wood burning stove, and it's also safer to use. And it's more versatile. We also use it to heat household water. The company now offers units with backup oil or gas."

Leo P. Seger, Atkinson, Neb.: "My 2003 4-WD Polaris Ranger 4-wheeler is very reliable. I've used it to pull heavy trailers without any problems. The 4-WD and differential lock, along with high and low ranges on the transmission, make this a very versatile machine to drive. I use it in my lawn care business to haul grass, seed and fertilizer. I highly recommend it."

On the negative side, "My Roomba robot floor vacuum does not do a good job picking up dirt. In my opinion, this machine isn't a vacuum but a glorified floor sweeper. Another problem is that it doesn't run long enough between battery charges. A single charge lasts only about one fourth as long as they advertise."

Dean L. Stolp, Sprague, Wash.: "It has exceptional lugging power and servicing it is a dream," says Dean, pleased with his 1994 Case IH 9270 4-WD tractor equipped with a Cummins 330 hp diesel engine and a manual transmission. "The transmission and hydraulic reservoirs are separate, which I think is great for long life. The cab is very comfortable."

"My 1995 Deere 900 7-shank subsoiler is my worst buy. The irons supporting the shanks aren't heavy enough and the shear bolts are only 5/8 in. in diameter, which I think is too small especially when the ground is dry and hard during the fall. This machine should have been built heavier."

Steve Bengtson, Erhard, Minn.: Steve likes his 1980 Allis Chalmers Gleaner F2 "corn and soybean special" combine. "It's very smooth and operator-friendly. It does a good job as well as being economical to operate. For a combine its size it has a lot of capacity."

Keith Wilson, Wabash, Ind.: Keith nominates his 1999 Honda Fourtrax 4-WDATV as his "best buy". "We bought our first Honda 4-WD ATV in 1988 - a 300 cc model. We used it every day to pull implements, spray chemicals, plow snow, or just drive to the mailbox. The 300 cc model is now used by our son and his family. They use it on a regular basis and have never had a service problem in 15 years. Four years ago we bought the Honda 450. It's a real workhorse. We now know why Honda advertises its ATV's as 'best on earth.'"

Dan Dargeloh, Milford, Neb.: "We're impressed with our 2003 Suzuki Vinson ATV equipped with a 500 cc engine and 5-speed transmission. The fenders could do a better job of deflecting mud, but otherwise it's a powerful, fast, and comfortable machine. We're well pleased with it."

"We like NC+ milo seed. It gives us a crop that stands well, yields decent and dries down fast. Drydown is very important to us."

"The Speidel weed wiper is our worst buy. The problem is that the bar drips a lot. Also, on side hills the fluid runs down to one end which causes the other end to dry off and quit wiping. We switched back to using an old-style rope wiper, which works much better because the wicks stay saturated with liquid and keep on wiping even on sidehills. In my opinion, rope wick wipers are superior to this product."

Rene R. Grossnickle, Burkittsville, Md.: "My 1992 Ford F-150 4-WD pickup equipped with a 351 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission is my worst buy. I started having problems with it the day I took delivery. Whenever I tried to use the windshield wipers I'd hear static on the radio. Another

"Best Buy" Wide Tires

Clair and Warren Wilson of Winchester, Ill., farm in the Illinois river bottoms and also use some irrigation. "We have to take soil tillage into consideration, so we decided to mount very wide tires on our Deere combine. We think they work better than either tracks or dual wheels," says Clair.

Wide tires are an option offered by Deere. Dual wheels fill with mud under some weather conditions, he says. "Also, we like the wide tires better for working on hillsides. We're pleased with them."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Clair and Warren Wilson, 132 Hillview Rd., Winchester, Ill. 61694 (ph 217 742-3918).



"Wide tires work better than tracks for us," say the Wilson brothers.

problem was that I had to replace three timing chains and the company would only pay for one. Also, the paint failed and the company wouldn't help out. The seat covers had to be replaced twice and are still bad. The dealer told me the problem with the seat covers was that I didn't get in and out of the pickup correctly. Also, the engine slugged up so bad that the oil pump had to be replaced twice."

Oliver Oswald, Eureka, S. Dak.: "I've owned three Ford Tauruses - a 2003 SE, a 1992, and a 1987 model. All have been best buys."

Pat Murphy, Morrison, Colo.: "My best buy is a 1953 Cessna 170B airplane which I purchased used when it was 18 years old. It



was equipped with a Continental 145 hp engine. In 1973 the engine had 1,000 hours and was on its second overhaul so I flew it to Ellington, Kansas, where I had Avcon install a new 180 hp Lycoming engine. I believe I now have the best possible combination of performance, utility and economy. It has almost Super-Cub ability. I routinely land on my pasture landing strip - which is only about 2,000 ft. long - at an altitude of 7,100 ft. above sea level, even on an 80-degree day. On other occasions, I use it to haul my family and baggage to our farm in South Dakota. It takes only about one third as long as it would take to drive the same trip. I've flown it north of the Arctic Circle, south of the tropic of Cancer, west to the wine valleys of California, and east to Bar Harbor, Maine. It's both an old workhorse and a pleasure-gaited thoroughbred. I can't imagine anything better."

Steven Turner, Fort Worth, Texas: Steven likes Flex Fence, a woven wire and small picket fence, for its privacy and snowlocking abilities (Allied Fence Co., 800 N. Henderson, Ft. Worth, Texas ph 817 332-7576). "This fence is available in 4, 5, and 6-ft. heights. It's built with quality and is very durable. It can be wired over a chain-link fence and easily replace, if necessary. It can also be wired over barbed wire. I liked it so much that I became a dealer."

Claude W. Reeson, Spring Grove, Va.: "I like my 1999 Power Trac PT-2445 articulated front-end loader (ph 800 843-9273). It's a versatile, lightweight loader equipped with a 3-pt. hitch at the rear and all-wheel hydraulic drive. The only problem was that the Deutz diesel engine was noisy and fuel-thirsty."

"My Homelite chainsaw is my worst buy. Parts are hard to find, and the chain oiling system is poorly designed."

"My 1999 Dodge 2500 2-WD heavy duty pickup equipped with a 360 cu. in. V-8 en-

gine and automatic transmission is a worst buy. It gets only 12 to 13 mpg on the highway and has had many transmission problems. Apparently all the newer automatic transmissions have internal solenoids to control the shifting and the oil and filters have to be changed often. These transmissions can't stand much up-or-down shifting or strain caused by towing or operating on soft ground. I traded the Dodge in for a 4-WD Chevrolet."

Raymond H. Martin, Tonganoxie, Kansas: "My worst buy ever was a wireless driveway alarm from Dakota Alert, Inc. It worked only part of the time. The company repaired it twice and then said it would be more feasible for me to replace it with a new one."

Murray Bonham, Lynden, Ontario: "My 2002 Deere 6 by 4 Gator equipped with a diesel engine is my best buy. It pulls great at the drawbar and can easily handle a 1/2-ton load. The engine has glow plugs and starts great. It's no effort to get into the two seats. But you have to be strong to lift the box to check the engine."

Gary McJunkin, Burdett, Kansas: A 1999 Quinstar 42-ft. Fallow Master tillage tool rates as Gary's "best buy". "It pulls as easily as our 32-ft. undercutter and does a much better job of killing grass."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1998 Deere 455 grain drill. "This drill is supposed to be able to handle 900 lbs. of hydraulic down pressure, but it won't stay together even at 600 lbs. We have to check the drill every day for bad bearings and discs. During the first three years we owned it, we averaged \$1,100 a year in repairs. Deere reps tell us there's nothing wrong with the drill, but they can't explain why the bearings and discs won't last. We're now looking for a different model."

Ray Alexander, Fredericton Junction, New Brunswick: "My 1992 Dodge pickup equipped with a diesel engine is my worst buy. The diesel engine is far superior to the 6.3-liter diesel in the Chevrolet pickup that I had owned before I bought this one. And overall, the Dodge is a better pickup. However, after five years the paint began to fall off and now it's rusting out. We've hardly ever driven this pickup during the winter. My next pickup won't be a Dodge."

Terry Horn, Creal Springs, Ill.: "I have arthritis, so I call this machine a farmer's wheelchair," says Terry about his 2000 Yamaha 4-WD Kodiak ATV. "I use it three or four times a day to haul feed and water, check fences, take a close look at my horses and cows, etc. During the winter I also load it up front and back with firewood. I put my tools in a bucket whenever I go out to fix fence."

"My 2000 Huskee riding mower equipped with a 42-in. deck, 16 1/2 hp engine and 7-speed transmission is my worst buy. First all the pins came out causing the deck to fall.

(Continued on next page)