

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

**Karl Retzlaff, Morris, Minn.:** Karl's pet peeve is work clothes that have poor zippers. "I get especially frustrated with the quality of zippers in jackets. Sometimes I'm able to wear a new jacket or vest only five or six times before the zipper breaks. I think there's an opportunity for someone to make a name brand quality zipper. That way the buyer would know whether or not a garment has a quality zipper. I would pay more for work clothes if I knew the zipper would last as long as the garment."

**Fred Balmer, Folsom, N. Mex.:** Fred likes his **Man Saver** air-powered post driver (Rohrer Mfg. Inc., or [www.rohrermfg.com](http://www.rohrermfg.com)). It runs off any small air compressor that can deliver at least 2.2 cubic feet of air at 70 to 90 psi. It makes 80 to 85 strokes per minute.



The basic T-post driver weighs 26 lbs. and sells for \$450 plus S&H. It can be fitted with interchangeable sleeves that allow it to drive almost any post on the market.

"I hook it up to a 70-lb. gas-powered compressor and use it to drive steel posts in rough, rocky ground. We've built fences on terrain so rough that it's difficult to walk. I've driven in more than 2,000 steel posts without any problems."

**Stephen Lehman, Huntsville, Ontario:** Stephen says **Linseal** tire sealant is his "best buy" (San Diego Mini Motorsports, ph 858 569-6229.) The British company that makes it says it's the world's first fiber and latex-free tire sealant. The sealant is a secret mixture of thixotropic compounds and recycled rubber. It works in both tube and tubeless tires. The sealant is said to be much less viscous than other sealants, making installation much simpler and quicker. They say a standard mini tractor can be puncture-proofed in less than six minutes for all four tires. The sealant remains active for the life of the tire.

"Over the years I've used a lot of liquid tire sealants where you remove the valve stem, pour in the liquid and re-inflate. This product is the only one I've found that actually works well," says Stephen.

**Eric Petrevich, Glen Gardner, N.J.:** "It's one of the most versatile pieces of equipment I own and is my best buy," says Eric, pleased with his **1988 Hustler 275** tractor equipped with a 24 hp engine (Hustler Turf Equipment, Hesston, Kansas ph 800 395-4757; [www.hustlerturfequipment.com](http://www.hustlerturfequipment.com)). "This tractor has a dual hydrostatic drive mounted on a 3-wheel configuration, and it has a front pto. I use it with a 6-ft. mower deck, 6-ft. plow, 6-ft. snowblower, and haul it around on a special easy-loading trailer. I made several other attachments for it. I bought the whole package used from a landscaper for less than \$4,000. But it has been worth well more than three times that much to me in cost savings. With the front mount pto, all the attachments are right in front of me so I have a great view of what I'm doing. This machine actually has a less than zero turning radius because one tire can go forward while the other one is going in reverse. The machine is more agile and flexible than any conventional tractor.

"I've built a log splitter, trailer mover, and forklift tines to go with the tractor. With the trailer mover, I can park trailers well out of the way and in areas that are impossible to get them out of with a standard truck. The tractor has an easily removable roll cage that's completely enclosed. It works perfect for plowing driveways and sidewalks without being exposed to the elements."

**Ivan Prochaska, Weaverville, Calif.:** Ivan likes his 2003 **Country Home Products** electric wheelbarrow (ph 800 687-6575). "It makes a job that used to be quite strenuous - pushing loads of wood up a steep incline from the woodshed to our home - seem easy. We're more than pleased with its performance and have found many other uses for it. It makes work almost seem like fun."

**Bradley Piper, Allersville, Ky.:** "I'm disappointed with my 2001 **Chevrolet Z71** pickup. It had electrical problems, most of which were fixed under warranty. The electrical center had to be replaced. There were also problems with the fuel pump, and now the fuel gauge doesn't work. For the money you have to pay for a new vehicle you just don't expect these kinds of problems."

**Floyd Mooney, Seven Points, Texas:** "My 2003 **Dodge 2500** pickup equipped with a diesel engine is my worst buy. The rear end started whining the first week after I bought it. The rear end has been overhauled three times but still makes a whining noise. I've tried and tried to get it fixed. A representative finally told me he would reimburse the money I paid for the service contract and fix the pickup. However, as of today, I still haven't received the check and the truck isn't fixed yet, either."

**Anthony Carlson, Hugo, Minn.:** "About three years ago I bought a **Homelite 33cc 14-in. gas-powered chain saw**, and it's my best buy. I've worn out the original bar and several chains so I've already gotten more than my money's worth out of it. This saw is meant for light duty work, but we use it a lot because we heat our home with wood. I use nothing but Homelite oil in it. The only problem was when the spark arrestor screen inside the muffler plugged up. We simply removed it. I also have an older Homelite string trimmer which has performed just as well."

**Richard McCullough, Beloit, Kansas:** A 1999 **Milwaukee Power-Plus 14.4-volt** rechargeable hammer drill rates as Richard's "best buy." "This is the best rechargeable drill I've ever owned. It not only has two drilling speeds and a fantastic hammer drill mode, but it has 20 adjustable settings for driving screws. It drives self-tapping and sheet metal screws with ease. It will quickly bore holes in wood, steel, and masonry products. The unit came with two battery packs and a charger so I never have a problem with drained batteries. The battery fits onto the handle two different ways to help balance the unit no matter which direction you hold the drill. This drill cost twice as much as the competitors, but it works 10 times better."

**Allen Imhoff, West Salem, Ohio:** "We purchased two new **6010 Ag Baggers** equipped with 8 or 9-ft. tunnels and also a **G6070 Ag Bagger** equipped with a 10-ft. tunnel. These machines are well built and have great capacity. The 6070 model has a double conveyor and a longer rotor which really increases capacity over the 6010. Over the years we've owned several Ag Baggers. They're all well built, and the company stands behind its products. I highly recommend them to anyone."

**Andrew Myers, Dallastown, Penn.:** "My **Sunflower 1211** disk harrow is built rugged and has been trouble-free. It's my best buy. It does a good, level job of disking in all ground conditions.

"My **Case IH 5120** tractor is my worst buy. The engine has been reliable, but the powershift transmission has had problems. Sometimes it won't shift between ranges. When that happens, I have to shut off the tractor and restart it before I can shift again. It's a real nuisance when you're out in the field plowing a piece of equipment."

**Joe Young, Deatsville, Ala.:** Joe likes his **Black & Decker 14.4-volt, 3/8-in. battery-operated drill** but says it has had some problems. "This drill works great except for the keyless chuck. It won't hold a drill bit even under light use. I've replaced the chuck twice but it still doesn't hold the bit. The company doesn't have a solution. However, they did send me a pack of four hex shank bits, which hold tight. If I could, I'd put another drill's chuck on it but the way it's designed that's impossible. My son-in-law has a new 18-volt model with the same problem."

**Ed Hostetler, Annville, Penn.:** Ed's the satisfied owner of a **Krone U-star** hay tedder. "I've used it to ted about 1,000 acres and have never had to replace even a single tooth. That's due to the excellent design of the spinner arms, which allows the spring of the tooth to flex fully. No other tedder I've seen has this feature."

**Darrell Runge, Mason, Ill.:** "I'm well satisfied with my 1999 **Caterpillar Challenger 75E**. It rides good in the field with very little slippage when pulling large equipment. The engine has a lot of power and is fuel efficient, and the machine has a nice, roomy cab."

**John F. Clement, Delano, Calif.:** A 2001 **M McCormick CX100** tractor equipped with a Perkins 4-cyl. turbocharged engine rates as John's "best buy." "It handles well with a comfortable cab, and it's built better than Ford or New Holland tractors. It has had some

problems, but my dealer quickly took care of them. When you spend \$50,000 to \$100,000 on a new tractor, it's the little stuff that really makes you mad. For example, I'd like to see a more convenient place for storing coffee. And why is there never a decent-sized, waterproof toolbox mounted as standard equipment on the outside of the tractor? Also, why don't tractors come factory equipped with tubeless tires with tire sealant already installed in them?"

**Michael R. Bonnell, Amboy, Ill.:** "I like my 2003 **Deere 4310 4-WD** tractor equipped with a 32 hp diesel engine, 12 by 12 power shuttle transmission, and a Deere 430 front-end loader. I use it with a 60-in. mowing deck which I hook up to the tractor's I-Match 3-pt. hitch. The combination of the 32 hp engine and 12 by 12 transmission puts a lot of power to the ground and makes the tractor feel more like a 60 hp model. This tractor has more hydraulic lift and performance than any other tractor brand in its class. The loader comes off in only three minutes, and with the I-Match 3-pt. hitch, I can remove the rear attachments in only one minute and start mowing."

**Charlene Cook Summers, Cedar Grove, N.C.:** "Our 2003 **Toro Twister** has a larger cargo bed than other brands and is my best buy. We use it to carry a chain saw, fuel, and tools to the woods as well as to carry feed and other products to our livestock. It can turn almost on a dime without risk of overturning."

**Joe Brummer, Auburn, Wash.:** A 1962 **International 460** utility tractor equipped with a 6-cyl. gas engine rates as Joe's "best buy." "It's neither too small nor too big and is easy to haul from job to job. It's also easy to service. I bought a quick tach backhoe attachment for it."

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