

saw can cut 40-ft. beams up to 8 1/2 by 17 inches."

David Fallon, Enumclaw, Wash.: "My **Garmin GPS** is a survivor of many trips over the past few years. It's waterproof and has survived several drops. I have fun using it and it's accurate to within a few feet. It works almost anywhere except in very tall, heavy trees.

"A 1995 **Ford Windstar** van is one of my worst buys ever. The vehicle's warranty covered numerous repairs to the valve train, tie rods, power steering pump, electrical, doors, head gaskets and several other recalls, but we had to pay for two transmission rebuilds (one at about 30,000 miles and another at about 100,000 miles) and several front brake rebuilds, and we spent almost \$2,000 over two years trying to solve a drivability problem with the engine. It was an expensive, frustrating vehicle to own."

Alan Ragel, Loogootee, Ill.: Alan's unhappy with paddle replacement tines for combine reels sold by **HCC, Inc.** "I checked them out last year at the Farm Progress Show. It looked like a good idea, but it turned out to be my worst buy ever. They're supposed to increase help in light, sparse, or special crop conditions, but I found they caused more reel loss in both short and tall beans. I contacted the company and told them I wanted a refund, but they wouldn't help."

Garry Schwartz, Spencerville, Ohio: Gary says his 1992 **Chevrolet Lumina** car, which has more than 379,000 miles on it, is his "best buy". "At first we used it as a family car, and then to deliver newspapers seven days a week. It still runs good and doesn't use any oil. I put a new transmission in at about 250,000 miles, and the brakes have been replaced several times. Otherwise it has required only routine maintenance."

Donald Teal, Rosalia, Wash.: "My **International 482** Cub Cadet lawn tractor is my best buy. Over the years I've owned several different brands of lawn tractors, but none have performed as well or been as cost efficient. This tractor is easy to maintain, and the Briggs and Stratton 11 hp engine runs at lower rpm's than the engines on many newer tractor models. The mower deck has an almost bullet-proof design and does a good job under all conditions."

Paul Erickson, Balaton, Minn.: Paul likes his 2003 **Deere 567** round baler. "Over the years I've owned other brands of round balers, but I like Deere the best. They're simple and easy to operate, with few problems. Also, they make the best bales."

"My 1986 **Honda Fourtrax** 4-wheeler is still a very dependable machine."

Darren Hom, Warburg, Alberta: Darren likes his **Alumi-Pro** professional welding kit that's designed to let you weld with a propane torch, MAPP gas or acetylene (BAC Industries, Hopkins, Minn. ph 952 945-9058). "There's no flux or fumes to worry about. It allows do-it-yourself repairs for propellers, engine castings, tools, carburetor bowls, ornaments, and many other jobs."

"What I like about this product is that I can weld aluminum, pot metal, galvanized, and zinc-based metals. If the parts are small you can use a propane torch, but I like using an oxy-acetylene torch in order to get better control of the weld. It melts sooner than aluminum so it works more like solder."

Lester Rose, Yellville, Ark.: "I love my 1996 **Dodge 2500** diesel pickup. I bought it used with about 193,000 miles. We moved from Texas to Arkansas and used it to pull a big load and an RV trailer. This pickup eats our Arkansas hills for lunch, even when towing a load with the cruise control locked in."

"Several years ago we bought a 1993 **Nissan Sentra** car with about 64,000 miles

on it. Now it has about 150,000 miles and we've installed two sets of spark plugs and a rebuilt axle (which it turns out it did not need) and one set of front brake pads. It still gets more than 30 mpg on the road and I never need to check the oil between changes. In fact, I've never added a drop of fluid of any kind. It's by far the best car we've ever owned."

"I have a question for today's car makers. Back in 1980 we bought a 1979 **Dodge Colt** and made many trips getting anywhere from 49 to 52 mpg. This car could lay down rubber in the first three of its eight gears. We drove it about 138,000 miles before my son crashed it. Why is it so hard to make a high mileage vehicle like that today?"

David Bradley, Warsaw, N.Y.: "My 2002

"Why is it so hard to make a high mileage vehicle like that today?"

Exmark Lazer zero turn riding mower is my best buy. After putting on 980 hours, we've only had to replace three deck belts and two pump belts. It does an excellent job of mowing and is very dependable."

Keith Laursen, Van Alstyne, Texas: "I like my 1977 **Massey 135** tractor equipped with a 3-cyl. gas engine. I bought this tractor used 10 years ago and it just keeps going and going. All I've had to replace were the spark plugs and filter."

"My 2003 **DeWalt** cordless tool combo set works fantastic and is a best buy. It includes a trim saw and a 5 1/2-in. drill. I use the drill as a driver to install sheet metal on buildings. No problems."

Richard F. Benich, Jefferson, Ohio: "My worst buy is a 2005 **Pequea** rotary hay rake, which I bought with my neighbor. The bolts that hold the tines on were so soft they broke and the tines fell off. A time flew up and hit me while I was making a turn. The dealer said the company wouldn't stand behind its product, nor would he. Now I'm without two sets of tines, and I've been told I'll have to pay for new ones or go without."

Harold P. Baker, Conover, N.C.: "I like my 2000 **Deere GT275** riding mower equipped with a 48-in. deck. It's equipped with a Kawasaki 17 hp engine which works well with the deck. This mower is stable on slopes, and turns short. It's hydrostatically-driven with foot controls, which I like. I use it to pull a trailer, spreader, and aerator."

Richard F. Wilder, Wellton, Arizona: "My 1989 **Massey Ferguson 1010** diesel tractor equipped with a hydrostatic transmission and 16 hp engine is my best buy. I use it to mow my lawns, rototill a big garden, remove bushes, haul material, and maintain roads. It's a workhorse that really saves my back. Very few problems."

Harry E. Nelson, Dow, Ill.: A 1996 **Dodge Caravan** rates as Harry's "best buy". "I bought this van as a demonstrator model and it has performed even better than I expected. It has almost 140,000 miles on it."

John Koslak, Douglas, Mass.: "I like my **Deere 4310** tractor equipped with a Deere 4300 front-end loader and hydrostatic transmission."

Murray Powell, Longmont, Colo.: Murray says his 2004 **Honda Rincon 650** ATV is his "worst buy". "The first year the overhead cam went out, and the company wouldn't cover it. Six months later the same problem happened, and again the company wouldn't help. It's a real lemon."

James A. McGrew, Avon, Ill.: James

FuelMeister Makes Biodiesel From Waste Products

Adding biodiesel production to his organic oilseed crushing plant just made sense to Joel Yorgey, J&L Grain Roasting. Between the occasional load of organic grain not fit for humans or feed, and waste oil from local restaurants, J&L is getting fuel for itself and its employees on the cheap.

"So far it is working pretty good," he says. "We are using a 75 percent mix of biodiesel and 25 percent petroleum diesel in our company tractor and pickup. We hope to get to 100 percent. Some of our employees are now using it in tractors and skid loaders."

Yorgey ordered the FuelMeister, a do-it-yourself biodiesel system from Azure Biodiesel, after attending a one-day workshop. A day after assembling the kit, he was producing biodiesel. The turnkey kit makes up to 40 gallons per day. The closed system eliminates pouring or stirring liquids and only requires the addition of liquid vegetable oil, methanol, lye and tap water.

Designed to fit in the corner of a garage, the only additional equipment needed are 50-gal. barrels for the source oil and for the finished biodiesel. Lye and methanol are available from Azure Biodiesel. The company estimates that supplies cost less than 70¢/gal., while the FuelMeister is priced at \$2,295 plus shipping.

"If you can read and follow directions, you can make fuel," says Yorgey. "Anyone with some common sense can do it."

Yorgey has used his own fresh-crushed virgin oil, as well as waste cooking oil and says the virgin oil works best. It leaves less glycerin or waste. However, both work equally well for fuel. The process is working so well that he is considering expanding.

"We are looking at turning our facility into a 100 percent biofuels operation, where we would crush seed from local farmers and make biodiesel from it," he says.

Yorgey points out that farmers in Germany, where diesel costs about \$8/gal., are growing their own fuel. They either bring it to a small regional crushing/pressing plant or several will share a small press. He thinks something similar could work here.

nominates his 2002 **Chevrolet 3/4-ton** pickup equipped with a diesel engine as his "best buy". "It has more than 175,000 miles on it. We're a dealer for several shortline companies and use this pickup to pick up and deliver equipment in the surrounding area. It gets almost 30 mpg even when pulling heavy equipment."

R.E. Charlton, Dillwyn, Va.: He's had problems with a **Rask** radial saw kit purchased from Harbor Freight. "Over the years I've ordered many products from this company and have had only minor problems, but this radial saw has failed to perform."

Dave Harvey, Spring Valley, Minn.: "I like my 2005 **Country Clipper** Jazee One zero turn riding mower. It's a well-built, quality machine and has reduced my mowing and trimming time by half. The joystick control is very responsive, although it does take some time to get used to operating it. I'm looking forward to years of trouble-free mowing."

Emil Rexin, Willaminin, Oregon: "My 1972 **Deere 830** tractor equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine is my best buy. I've used it in my landscaping business for 25 years. It has more than 8,000 hours on it but still doesn't use any oil. It always starts and is easy to handle."

Schmidt Farms 2000 Ltd., Thorsby, Alberta: "Our best buy is our 2000 **Case IH**



The FuelMeister is a do-it-yourself kit that lets you make up to 40 gal. of biodiesel per day. The closed system eliminates the need to pour or stir liquids.

"I've had several people approach me about taking a mobile press from farm to farm like I once did with a mobile soybean roasting unit," says Yorgey.

He explains that several factors currently work against such a program, especially in the Midwest. One is the relative oil content of different crops. The other is a farm program that penalizes farmers for planting anything other than corn and soybeans.

"Sunflower and canola yield more oil per acre than soybeans, but as long as the federal farm program remains the same, there is no reason for farmers to change," explains Yorgey. "Europe is four to five years ahead of us in looking at sunflowers and rape/canola. ADM is converting plants in Europe from soybean to rapeseed crushing."

Contact: **FARM SHOW** Followup, J&L Grain Roasting, 12538 Addison Ave., Riceville, Iowa 50466 (ph 641 985-4255); or Dan Dykema, Azure Biodiesel Co., P.O. Box 468, Sully, Iowa 50251 (ph 641 594-3247; dan@azurebiodiesel.com; www.azurebiodiesel.com).

MX 120 tractor equipped with a **Case IH 300** front-end loader. It has about 6,000 trouble-free hours on it. The loader is excellent. We use it every day during the winter to feed silage to our cows. This is our main tractor and we really like it."

Charles Schilling, Frazee, Minn.: "My worst buy is a **Sears Craftsman 6 1/8-in.** jointer-planer. The motor will operate only if the temperature is 30 degrees F or above—otherwise it just sits there and smokes. I took the unit back to the company but they said there's nothing wrong with it. They plugged it into an outlet at room temperature and of course everything worked fine. However, it still won't operate when the temperature is less than 30 degrees. Now I'm stuck with a piece of junk."

Tom Nichol, Neodesha, Kansas: "I nominate **FARM SHOW** as my best buy. It never disappoints. It always starts easy and finishes strong. It's also durable and holds up through dozens of readings and readers. It's a great value."

Duane Proper, Mooresburg, Tenn.: "My **Dakota Alert** wireless drive alert has been very reliable (Elk Point, S. Dak. ph 605 356-2772). If I ever have a question, all it takes is one call and their service department

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