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**MacDon 9350** swather heads his "best buy" list. "I use it with a 972 25-ft. header and a 922 16-ft. hay header. This machine is a pleasure to operate and requires little maintenance.

"I'm disappointed, however, with the 2002 30-ft. **MacDon 960** draper header we mounted on our Deere 9600 combine. The problem is that in certain wheat crops it wants to backfeed under the canvas, causing damage to the canvas. We've tried speeding up the header and adjusting the adapters closer to the feeder, but it hasn't helped. Next time I think I'll try using a Deere draper header."

**William R. Townsend, Camden, Tenn.:** "My 1989 **Ford 1520** tractor equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine does a good job of handling my 5-ft. Bush Hog finishing mower. I use it to pick up and carry our 1991 **Troy-**



**Bilt Tomahawk** chipper-shredder equipped with an 8 hp Briggs & Stratton engine. It's a best buy, too.

"I use my 1997 **MTD** riding mower to pick up and grind leaves for compost. The material is blown into a home-built box that I mounted on a garden trailer. The box is open on front and has screen sides and a back door along with a tin roof.

"My 1991 **Woodchuck** wood stove works great (Meyer Mfg., Dorchester, Wis.).

"I haven't had good luck with **Poulan** chainsaws, either electric or gas-powered."

**Lorne Orr, London, Ontario:** "It never gets less than 50 mpg and gets more than 60 mpg at times," reports Lorne about his 1998 **Volkswagen Jetta** equipped with a diesel engine. "I don't know why more vehicles aren't available with diesel engines. This car is dependable and economical.

"I use my **New Holland** skid steer loader every day and it's a best buy. I couldn't farm without a skid loader.

"Reading and following the owner's manual often makes the difference between best and worst buys."

**John Rempel, Kleefeld, Manitoba:** "It was a lemon from the beginning and is my worst buy ever," says John about his 1990 **Deere 318** riding mower. "I use this machine only for garden tilling. It had a lot of transmission problems. The first two transmissions were covered by the warranty, but I had to repair the next two at my own expense. It cost me \$1,200 each time. Something is wrong with this machine more often than not. The tiller bearings had to be replaced right after the warranty expired. At one point the pto, clutch, and valve seat on the engine also had to be replaced. I could take out the valve seat with my bare fingers. I had to bring it to a machine shop where they put in a new seat.

"I paid \$4,500 for repairs. It now has 538 hours on it so I only put on about 30 hours per year. It turns out I've spent almost \$9 per hour on repairs for every hour I've used the machine, not including routine maintenance costs for tune-ups and oil changes. It was tuned up twice last year. I can't afford to buy a new machine, or to make any more repairs on this one."

**Peter Sidlauskas, Amsterdam, N.Y.:** Peter's the satisfied owner of a 2004 **Patz 98** silo unloader. "This is a good machine, once I got it broke in. It can take on frozen haylage or corn silage with ease."

He's unhappy with his **Georgia** work

shoes. "They're the most poorly made shoes I've ever bought. In barely three months the soles cracked and a heel ruptured. That's China craftsmanship? The shoes were comfortable when I first wore them, until the soles separated."

**Graham Robertson, Westminster, Md.:** "I bought my 1984 **Chevrolet S10** pickup used more than 10 years ago. It now has about 400,000 miles on it but is still going strong. We use it to haul feed, as well as sheep and lambs. We call this pickup our 'gray ghost' because it refuses to die."

**Mike Schmidt, Durham, Mo.:** "Our 2003 **New Holland 617** disc mower is our worst buy ever. The first time we used it, one end of the machine fell apart and came through the canvas. Also, there was no oil in the gearbox so it had to be rebuilt. Then a bearing in the gearbox went out. Later, the power shaft broke even though the machine hasn't even cut 400 acres yet. We had the powershaft repaired at a local shop because our dealer no longer wants to see this machine.

"The operator's manual doesn't include any phone numbers for the company. The manual just says to see your dealer, and when you get the phone number from the dealer and call the company, they tell you to see your dealer. This disc mower has spent more time at the dealer than it has in the field. Now I won't even give this machine shed room."

**Ferrel Collins, Clay City, Ind.:** "My 2008 **Ford 250 Super Duty** pickup runs and drives good and is very stable on the road. It gets 10 to 13 mpg empty and 6 to 8 mpg pulling a trailer. My only complaint is that the fuse block in the cab is hard to service."

**Dean L. Freeborn, Rickreall, Oregon:** Dean's impressed with his 2006 and 2007 **MacDon 9250** swathers. "We've operated MacDon swathers for several years, and these 9250 models are really good machines. We've used them to cut several different kinds of grass seed and hay. As long as you keep the sicklebar sharp they'll cut through the crop.

"The 2004 **Case IH MXM 155** tractor I bought last year is my worst buy. It has had numerous problems with the electrical system, hydraulics, leaks, fuel pump, etc. We bought this tractor to keep from putting so many hours on our older Magnums, but unfortunately we still had to use them because the MXM 155 is down all the time.

"My **Case IH 7220** and **8030** tractors work

**"It has had numerous problems with the electrical system, hydraulics, leaks, fuel pumps, etc."**

great. Too bad the company doesn't build these models any more."

**Peter Janssens, Alexandria, Ontario:** "My 2000 **Crary Bear Cat EZ Trim** mower is my worst buy. The belt-driven pulley on top of the trimmer assembly split in half the first time I used the mower. All the spot welds came loose. The company's help line wasn't of much help. There have been numerous other problems with this machine."

**Ian Brent Fetterly, Lanark, Ontario:** "My new **Deere 5205 56 hp 4-WD** tractor equipped with a 541 front-end loader is my best buy. It always starts, even in the coldest weather. I've buried this tractor up to the frame in mud but have always been able to get out. It's fuel efficient and easy to service with a clear and concise owner's manual. No

## My Medical Worst Buy

Wesley Gehman, Stephensport, Ky., says, "The worst thing that has happened to me in a long time occurred last summer when I nearly cut off my finger in a farm accident. My medical experiences after the accident might help someone else who ever has to go through this in the future.

"The accident happened at 10:00 a.m. First we rushed to Urgent Care, where we were referred to a local hospital. Urgent Care had put ice on the finger but the hospital workers said it wasn't necessary and took it off. After laying in the emergency room 11 1/2 hours, they finally took me into surgery. We had agreed with the doctor that we wanted to take the finger off because it had already

turned gray but when I came out of surgery, they told my parents they had decided to re-attach it.

"After two days, the finger turned very dark. Two weeks after the surgery, the finger was black. The bill for the surgery was \$26,300 and now they wanted another \$10,000 to take off the now-dead finger.

"Instead, we went doctor shopping and found one who did the job for \$300 and did a good job. The lesson is to take control of your own medical care. Beware unnecessary surgeries."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wesley Gehman, 125 Carmen Lane, Stephensport, Ky. 40170.

problems. It's a simple, basic tractor that gets the job done.

"My **Stihl 270** chainsaw starts hard and guzzles gas. It has frequently been back to the dealer. It won't start in cold weather so I built a warming box to keep it warm during the winter. Another problem is the anti-kickback cutting chain won't cut. This chainsaw is fragile and temperamental and only runs on high-test gas."

**Gailey Henderson, Williamstown, W. Va.:** "My **Troy-Bilt** rototiller equipped with an 8 hp Kohler engine is my best buy. I've used it for more than 20 years and have worn out two sets of tines, yet I've never replaced the spark plug. The machine always starts right up."

**Norman Roth, Wellesley, Ontario:** "We're pleased with our **Mighty Dumper** trailer (John B. M. Mfg. Ltd., www.johnbm mfg.com). This dump trailer has an automatic tailgate with a grain door. We use it to haul grain and gravel and to stack manure in windrows for composting."

**Richard Begolka, Atlanta, Ill.:** "I like my 2003 **Deere 4310** tractor equipped with a hydrostat transmission. I use it to do commercial mowing with a 6-ft. finish mower around about 20 large hog confinement buildings, plus some other mowing. This tractor is a pleasure to use with the hydrostat transmission, and it's quite easy on fuel."

**Dan Gardner, Elma, Iowa:** "My **Lincoln 12-volt** cordless rechargeable grease gun is my best buy. It works great and I like its versatility. My only complaint is the replacement batteries are way too expensive."

**Dan Kibbe, Waterford, Penn.:** "Our worst buy ever was a new **Deere 7710 2-WD** tractor equipped with a powershift transmission. There was trouble from day one with the electronics, but the biggest problem was with the transmission. It would go into park and into a gear at the same time. The dealer said they couldn't do anything until it broke.

"After the warranty had expired, one side of the transmission case finally blew out. Of course, we were stuck with a big repair bill because the company said it was out of warranty, even though the dealer had documented records of all the times he had looked at it. We were still having some problems with the transmission after they fixed it so we traded it off."

**George Schneider, Pioneer, Calif.:** "I often read negative comments about **Harbor Freight** tools in FARM SHOW. However, I have a different philosophy. I use Harbor Freight to buy tools that I don't necessarily need on a long term basis. For example, instead of renting a 1/2-in. drill for two days at a cost of \$10 a day, I'll buy a cheap drill for \$29 and toss it after I'm done with the job. That way I don't worry about spending all my time renting and returning a rental. I don't expect to find 'professional' tools at Harbor

Freight in the first place."

**Jeffrey M. Heiser, Vesper, Wis.:** "My 2006 **Maurer 34-ft.** hopper bottom grain trailer pulls easy and is my best buy. It has sight windows on the side of the trailer so I can always see how much grain is left inside.

"My **Classic** outdoor wood burning furnace is easy to hook up and is a best buy. Burning wood sure beats buying LP gas.

"I'm disappointed with the parts distribution provided by **AGCO**. I ordered parts for my Massey Ferguson tractor from AGCO. They repeatedly had to be sent back or else they didn't come at all. Our dealer tried to help. There's no excuse for this mess."

**Marlin Oberholtzer, Ephrata, Penn. ph 717 738-3264:** "I bought my **Farm Master** forage mixer new about four years ago and it's my best buy. It has only a 3 hp motor but does a great job of mixing feed. It also has many stainless steel parts and digital scales. I can't say anything bad about this machine.

"My three **Horst** bunk feeders are all best buys. It's a stationary, belt-type feeder that runs the length of my feed bunk and about 7 ft. above it. A "plow" moves back and forth, pushing feed off the belt and into the bunk. It works great, and it costs far less than comparable commercial models. I put three feeders in for less than half the cost of one feeder from a name brand company. A local man here makes them."

**Marvin Hammer, Bartow, Fla.:** "My 2006 **Volkswagen Jetta** equipped with a diesel engine is my best buy. It's comfortable to drive, handles well, and performs great. Best of all, it always gets at least 40 mpg, even in stop-and-go driving, and at least 45 mpg on the highway. The fit, finish and quality are excellent."

**Denny Williams, Trevor, Wis.:** "I love my 1983 **Black & Decker** chop saw. I use it every day. Four years ago the handle broke so I wanted to buy another one. However, I found out the company doesn't make these saws any more so I replaced it with a **DeWalt** model. Unfortunately, I was able to use that saw for only two years before it burned up. Then I bought another DeWalt but it quit working, too, so I had another handle put on the Black & Decker and that's what I use."

**Richard L. Miller, Elwood, Ind.:** "My 1982 **Kubota B7100** tractor is my best buy. I haven't spent a dime on this tractor except for a new radiator cap. I traded it in for a 2004 **Deere X585** equipped with a 62-in. belly mower, and it's my worst buy. It's equipped with a model 45 loader, a quick-tach snowblower, and a canvas cab. The mid pto is poorly engineered which makes it difficult to attach equipment. The tractor was leaking oil onto my cement floor, so I took it to the dealer for repair work. The tractor was there for a week but the dealer still couldn't find the problem. I had to pay \$141 just to