

**Mathew J. Hart, Mayer, Minn.:** Mathew nominates his 1994 **Chevy K2500** pickup equipped with a 6.5-liter, turbocharged diesel engine as his "best buy". "I bought it used with about 215,000 miles on it and have put another 30,000 miles on it. All I've had to replace is the starter. It has a low-gear manual transmission which gives me all the towing power I need. I love this truck."

**Ross W. Keske, Crystal, Minn.:** "Two years ago I bought a bottle of **Battery Equalizer** just to see how it would work on a 12-year-old battery used with an electric-over-hydraulic lift (ph 877 656-0067; www.batteryequalizer.com). It brought the battery back to life and it's now about 14 years old. Works great. The company says it can double the life of any vehicle's battery by reversing the built-up sulphation that kills batteries as they get older. I just purchased 2 more bottles to use on my forklift."

**Glendon Peterson, Taylors Falls, Minn.:** "My **Snapper** zero turn riding mower equipped with a 52-in. deck works fast, is durable, has a comfortable ride, and cuts well. Makes it fun to cut our large farm yard."

**Chuck Morris, Chondrant, La.:** "It's the best diesel pickup I've ever owned," reports Chuck, who bought a used 1997 **Ford F-350** pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter Power Stroke diesel engine. "It now has more than 220,000 miles on it but only uses one quart of oil between oil changes. It has a lot of power and torque and gets about 16 mpg."

**Edward A. Magnuson, Saint Paul, Minn.:** "My 2011 **Ford Escape** all-wheel-drive SUV is fantastic. It gets 22 mpg and is neither too large nor too small. It rides and drives great with no rattles, squeaks or wind noise. It's a great vehicle."

**James F. O'Neill, Las Animas, Colo.:** "It's a fun little car to drive," says James about his **Fiat 500**. "I'm 6 ft. 4 in. tall, yet I have plenty



of room in this car. The only down side so far is that the base model doesn't have a spare tire - not even a small donut emergency tire. This car's fuel economy has exceeded the EPA estimates, which is 34 mpg. Sometimes my son rides with me, and he's 6 ft. 6 in. tall. The looks we get when we're riding together cause both of us to chuckle."

**Robert Dumas, Long Lake, Minn.:** "I like my **Stihl MS 260** and 026 chainsaws. I especially like the MS260 because it has compression release, which makes it easy to start."

"My **New Holland TN750** tractor has a lot of power and is small enough to fit between rows of orchard trees."

**Billy Rutledge, Earlsboro, Okla.:** Billy likes his **Deere 5303** tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "The only problem is the rod nuts came off inside the bucket's tilt cylinders. Everything else about this tractor has been good."

"I use my 2003 **Zuma** scooter to pull a trailer, and I can also haul small objects on it between my feet."

**Roy Gray, Jr., Newsoms, Va.:** "My 2007 **Husqvarna 2454** riding mower is one of the best mowers I've ever owned. I just put the first new battery in it. I use it to cut an acre of lawn once a week, and sometimes twice a week. It never fails to start right up. I'm 79 years old and have hip problems on both sides but I can still cut my grass."

**Richard De Franco, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

"It's the best and most economical tractor I've ever owned," says Richard about his **Graveley 2-wheeled tractor** (www.graveley.com). "I use it with a snowblower and 42-in. mower deck and have never had a problem. I loaned it to a friend, which was the worst thing I ever did because his barn burned to the ground with the tractor inside. I felt like I lost my best friend."

**Robert Schindler, Colfax, Wis.:** A **MacDon R80** 16-ft. discbine rates as Robert's "worst buy". "Before I bought this discbine I told the company sales rep that I farm hilly ground, and he assured me that this new machine would work on my hills just fine. Well, it doesn't. The hydraulic drive system cavitates going up hill and as a result the machine won't cut hay. The dealer has been out many times, along with other company reps. They've tried many things to solve the problem in the last 4 years, but nothing has helped. I use a 220 hp tractor to pull the machine, but even it sometimes doesn't have enough power."

"The company has offered to buy it back at a fraction of what it's worth. Looks like I'm going to take a big loss."

**Chuck Bristol, Almont, Mich.:** "I did my homework for 3 years and finally bought a **Bobcat Toolcat 5600** to replace my loader tractor, forklift, and Deere Gator. The Toolcat is a handy machine, but in less than 2 years the hydraulic pump seals failed 6 different times. I was very disappointed. This machine turned out to be my worst buy in 40 years of farming."

**Ronald Miller, Aura, Mich.:** Ronald's impressed with **Flex Seal** liquid rubber sealant (ph 800 307-6201; www.getflexseal.com). "I saw this product advertised on TV and ordered it because I had a vexing problem with a leaky farmhouse roof. It comes in a 14-oz. aerosol spray can. I prepared the area that I suspected was leaking and sprayed it with FlexSeal. No more leaks."

**Garen Reinking, Littleton, Colo.:** "I like my 2006 **New Holland TN70A** 4-WD tractor equipped with a **Bush Hog M446** front-end loader. This tractor starts instantly in cold weather. It's fuel efficient and handles most tasks suited for a 70 hp tractor with ease. It's a reliable unit."

"Last year I bought a ditcher made by **General Utility** at our local Deere dealer. This unit is made in China and uses soft hollow steel for the shank and shoe holder. After traveling 50 yards making a 9-in. deep ditch at a very slow speed, the shank was already bent. By the time I went 75 yards the shoe holder was bent. The machine had no warranty."

**John M. Gilbert, Boonville, N.Y.:** "My **Ferris** zero turn riding mower works great and reduces my mowing time by half (ph 800 933-6175; www.ferrisindustries.com). I have 75 Black Spruce trees on my property to go around. This mower handles that easily. It's a great mower."

"My 1972 **Cub Cadet** riding mower is still going strong. I use it to mow more than 2 acres every week and couldn't be happier with it."

**Paul Cornwell, Newark, N.Y.:** "It has been trouble-free," says Paul about his 2004 **Kubota** 40 hp diesel tractor. "I use the same fuel in it that I use to heat our house."

**John Cotner, Falmouth, Va.:** "I like my **Metabo** 6-in. angle grinder with quick connect tool change (ph 877 619-5602; www.cpometabo.com). The wheels are easy to change, and it comes with an electronic soft start that's easy on the body. This tool fits comfortably in my hands and has a good safety switch. I like it so much that I bought the company's 4 1/2-in. grinder and a hammer drill, too. All these tools work great. They



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## "Best Buy" 6-WD Army Truck

Joel Pominville of Middlebury, Vt., says his "best buy" is the 1988 6-WD Army truck he bought through [www.govliquidation.com](http://www.govliquidation.com).

"We operate a 200-cow dairy farm and chop and haul our own feed. We also do a lot of ditching and other drainage work," says Pominville. "I needed a truck that could haul feed and also haul ditching spoils out of our low ground. The truck I bought is well-maintained, has an Allison automatic transmission, and a hydraulic system for the dump body. Anyone can drive it."

"We built a high-sided feed box for the truck that measures 22 ft. long. The sides and tailgate come off so the dump box can be easily loaded with dirt from my excavator when I'm ditching. The dump box measures 18 ft. long."

"This truck, all finished and painted, cost me less than \$20,000 and I fully expect to have it for the rest of my life."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Joel Pominville, 783 Quarry Rd., Middlebury, Vt. 05753 (ph 802 388-7776).

cost a little more money, but they'll outlast me."

On the negative side, he lists his 2008 **Ford F-350** dually pickup equipped with a 6.4-liter diesel engine. "I bought this pickup used in 2010 with low miles. The transmission immediately started to shift rough and would 'hammer' into gear when turning corners. The dealer said this was normal, part of the fuel efficiency system. The problem would clear for a month or so each time they reprogrammed the computer. Another problem was that the exhaust filter shut down which stalled the pickup on the highway. I've owned Fords all my life, but

## "At 1,079 miles the engine blew up when a valve embedded inside a piston."

this is the third Ford lemon I've had in a row and will be my last."

**Gene Reeker, Neb.:** "Last December I bought a drum sander from **Grizzly Industrial**. The machine was built in China and is a complete piece of junk."

**Michael Cumston, Priest River, Idaho:** Michael's disappointed with his 2005 **Ford Expedition** SUV equipped with a 5.4-liter engine. "The center seat/armrest metal broke at the hinge, the rear flashers blow fuses, and water ran into the rear hatch and caused the rear wipers to short out."

"Soon after I bought this vehicle the brake shoes broke, and then at 1,079 miles the engine blew up when a valve embedded inside a piston. On the replacement engine, the spark plugs fouled out constantly and cost \$12 apiece to replace and \$200 for labor. The fuel injectors malfunctioned and even though there was a company recall on them, they said I had put 15 miles too many on my vehicle so I had to pay. The rig's 2 catalytic converters went bad and cost \$1,000 apiece to replace. Another problem is that water and sand get into the spark plug hole through rubber seals and cause the engine to misfire. This SUV is a \$41,000 piece of junk."

**Jeff Bond, Anaconda, Mont.:** "I log trees at an elevation of 8,000 ft. here in the

mountains so I need a powerful saw. My 2010 **Husqvarna 576XP** always starts even when it's below zero. The 28-in. bar is long enough to take down most trees and lets me limb them without bending over."

**Tom Jurenka, Hingham, Mont.:** Tom's impressed with his 2010 **McCormick XTX 145** front wheel assist tractor equipped with an L175 front-end loader with grapple fork. "I put 550 hrs. on this tractor moving round bales and pulling a field sprayer equipped with a 1,500-gal. tank and 100-ft. boom. This tractor is easy to operate and the controls are well placed. I especially like the finger tip shift control and how it shifts smoothly up or down. A hydraulic hose failed but was replaced under warranty. Also, there was a factory recall of a computer control. Otherwise, this tractor has worked great."

**Richard Green, King Ferry, N.Y.:** "I like my **Kaito** Voyager dynamo and solar-powered radio with short wave and AM FM as well as NOAA weather bands (ph 866 524-8676; www.kaitousa.com). I have a collection that includes about 38 various radios, but this little unit is the best. It sells on the company website for \$69.95, but I bought



mine from Sportsman Guide for \$49.97 ([www.sportsmansguide.com](http://www.sportsmansguide.com)). Fortunately this radio doesn't have digital tuning. It's really designed for sane, simple use and runs for hours when the charge mode is used. It's also battery, solar and AC-powered. I really like it."

"The bar-mounted chainsaw sharpener I bought at **Northern Tool** is my worst buy. The owner's manual doesn't come with instructions on how to set up and use this product. I made 13 different phone calls to the company's customer service department and spoke with many 'supervisors' in customer

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