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service, two of whom hung up on me. I finally received an envelope with written instructions for the product's use."

Lee Roy Nix, Mountainair, New Mexico: Lee Roy's disappointed with **Rataway Fragrance**. "Rats, mice, squirrels, and even rabbits were getting into the engine compartment of my motorhome. You're supposed to dilute this product with a gallon of distilled water and spray it on surfaces such as wiring, engines and other parts of vehicles. However, after using it as instructed over a period of 4 months, I haven't noticed any decrease in rodent activity whatsoever. I'm totally dissatisfied with this product."

Bob Sokoly, Wyckoff, N.J.: Bob's impressed with **SealLube** seal expander, which is designed to stop rubber oil seal leaks in engines, transmissions, power steering and hydraulic systems (ph 800 434-9192; www.seallube.com). An 8-oz. bottle treats up to 10 quarts of oil.

"I bought it because I own a 1952 Massey Harris tractor that had a leaky hydraulic pump. I mixed a bottle of SealLube in with the hydraulic oil, and within a half hour the leak stopped and it hasn't leaked since. I'd recommend this product to anyone."

Tommy Nelson, Crawfordsville, Ore.: "It wasn't cheap, but it's the best riding mower I've ever used," says Tommy about his 2006 **Deere LX 280**. "I recently went back to the dealer and had all new belts put on it for the first time."

Reed Johnson, Molalla, Okla.: "We use our **Kubota RTV** side-by-side utility vehicle on our farm during the summer when there's a lot of dust. The vehicle's air intake is located down low so it plugs. I had to relocate it up higher. Bad design."

John Kennedy, Seligman, Ariz.: John's the satisfied owner of a 2011 **DeWalt** 18-volt impact wrench. "I use this wrench on anything with big bolts and to remove nuts when changing tires. I like it because I don't need an air hose or compressor and because it's easy to take to remote locations. It has a lot of power as long as you have a good battery."

R.D. Marsh, Salem, Ore.: He likes his 2006 **Deere** 5225 MFWD tractor equipped with a cab, power reverser transmission, and front-end loader. "Deere made a winner when they came out with their 25 series tractors. This tractor has a quiet cab, is comfortable, and has adequate power. If you don't overload or abuse it it'll provide excellent service. I also own a **Deere** 5525 model that works great. Both tractors are built rugged, as are the 500 and 600 series front-end loaders that I use with them."

"My 2003 **Dodge** 1-ton longbed pickup equipped with a 4-door cab, High Output Cummins diesel engine, and 6-speed manual transmission is a best buy. It rides and drives wonderfully. No problems. We added a **K&N** air filter kit which we're quite happy with (ph 800 858-3333; www.knfilters.com). This pickup is the best hauler I've ever driven. I've owned several Fords and GM pickups over the years, but my Dodge has a lot of power and will walk away from them. There's a reason you see so many Dodge pickups pulling livestock trailers, fifth wheel rigs, and machinery trailers, etc. on the road. It gets 18 to 21 mpg empty and 14 to 16 mpg towing a heavy load, which I think is pretty good."

Dean Powell, Kent, Wash.: "I like my **Milwaukee** 18-volt cordless tools and the batteries that power them. Ever since the company replaced 14 different batteries on my cordless tools because of a recall, not one battery has died. Altogether I have more than 24 Milwaukee tools and like all of them. I seldom buy another brand."

"My 1999 **International** 4700 single axle truck equipped with a 444 cu. in. engine lacks power. This truck has only about 17,000 miles on it but has had many problems. First the fan thermostat quit working which caused the engine to overheat. Then the instrument panel quit working and cost \$800 to fix. I only drive this truck when necessary in order to avoid more repairs. The overhead bin for papers doesn't work - what ever happened to glove compartments? I also had to replace the starter."

M. Bogden, Corbett, Ore.: "No problems with my 2004 **Ford F-350** crewcab pickup equipped with a diesel engine and manual transmission. We love not having an automatic transmission. This pickup hauls whatever we need and the ride is comfortable."

"Our worst buy is ethanol. We live in the boonies so we have to stock up on gas, and in order to store the gas we have to add a conditioner to it. That helps keep the gas stable but if we don't have a bottle of the conditioner around, the gas goes bad and is only good for burning brush."

Jared Jenkins, Freedom, Wyo.: "It saves a lot of fabricating time in my shop," says Jared, pleased with his 2012 55-ton **Edwards Iron Worker** (ph 715 574-9323; www.ironworkerllc.com).



Kevin Holland, Sandy, Utah: Kevin likes his **Byers Tilt-A-Hitch** (ph 618 616-1790; www.tiltahitch.com). "It's really handy for loading tractors, antique cars or riding mowers onto a flatbed trailer with short 5-ft. long ramps. By pulling a pin, you can stay hitched to your pickup while you crank the front end up with the trailer jack. Lets you tip the back end to the ground."

He's impressed with his 2000 **Port-A-Cool** shop-style, portable evaporative cooling unit (ph 800 695-2942; www.port-a-cool.com). "I just aim it where I'm working-under a tractor or car or in the yard. It hooks up to a garden hose and has a float-type shut-off, or you can pour a couple of buckets of water in the fill area on back of the unit. It only works in areas with low humidity."

Richard Albrandt, Sterling, Colo.: "My 2010 **Kiotti** tractor equipped with a front-end loader is dependable and easy to maneuver around trees and buildings. No problems. I often use it with a 3-pt. mounted rototiller. The only downside is that it starts hard in cold weather."

Raymond Karwoski, Bath, N.Y.: "I like my two **Ford** tractors - a 1947 2N and a 1951 8N. I bought both used; the 2N in 1964 and the 8N in 1968. Both have been dependable and required only routine maintenance over all our years of use."

"My 2004 **Cub Cadet** 1022 garden tractor has caused more trouble in 8 years than the **Deere** 112L garden tractor I bought new in 1985 and retired in 2003."

J.D. Lyall, Tonkawa, Okla.: J.D. is satisfied with his 2008 **Dodge Dakota** pickup equipped with a 3.7-liter 6-cyl. engine. "I downsized pickups after selling my cattle because I no longer had a trailer to pull. This little utility pickup runs good and suits me fine. No problems after 40,000 miles. It isn't as fuel efficient as advertised, but it still burns less fuel than my larger Dodge Ram 1500."

Robert Draginis, Navarre, Fla.: "Two



Tom Trantham installed his American Microsolar rooftop hot water heater last winter and says it already has saved him \$200 a month in reduced gas bills.

Solar Unit Keeps Dairy In Hot Water

Happy Cow Creamery owner Tom Trantham is happy about his rooftop hot water heaters. The American Microsolar units just installed this past winter have been saving him \$200 a month in reduced gas bills, and efficiency will increase with the spring and summer sun.

"With my creamery, I'm required to have 145-degree or hotter water all the time," says Trantham. "The well water comes out of the ground at 50 degrees. Even on a cloudy day this winter, the Microsolar unit would bring it to 120 degrees, and my gas water heater did the rest. As the months have passed, it's been getting even more efficient."

With an on-farm creamery and dairy store, Trantham has more hot water needs than most 85-cow, grass-fed dairies.

"My milk only travels 48 ft. from the cows to bottles," he says. "It's full fat (not homogenized) and I use a low temperature (145-degree) pasteurization process that leaves the milk tasting better."

While processing his own milk products has increased profits, it also increased his need for hot water. When sterilizing storage tanks, bottling lines and other equipment, he boosts water temperatures to 160 degrees.

The two rooftop Microsolar units have 75-gal. insulated, stainless steel tanks at the top of solar collector units. Well water passes through heat exchangers in the tanks on its way to the creamery's 100-gal., propane-heated, hot water tank.

The Microsolar unit uses a "thermosyphon" design. Each tank is heated

by water moving through 20 triple layer, parallel glass tubes. The innermost layer is a 20-mm diameter tube that runs inside a 47-mm black glass tube from the bottom of the storage tank down the slope of the unit. The black glass tube is surrounded by a 5-mm vacuum layer and a 58-mm glass tube.

As the sun strikes the collector, water in the middle tube absorbs the heat and begins to rise toward the tank. Cold water in the tank is siphoned down through the innermost tube to replace the rising hot water.

"It's the tube within a tube that makes the units so efficient," says Larry Jordan, American Microsolar. "There's no mixing of hot and cold water and no dead spots. Water only moves through the collection tubes if it's warmer than water in the tank."

The heating tubes are mounted between a double glazed upper layer glass panel and nickel chrome mirror finish floor panel. Solar rays not absorbed by the tubes as they pass through are reflected back at the underside of the heating tubes.

Jordan says the units retail for around \$4,250.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, American Microsolar, 100 Helmsman Way, Suite 114, Hilton Head Island, S.C. 29928 (ph 843 422-6018; www.americamicrosolar.com) or Happy Cow Creamery, 332 McKelvey Rd., Pelzer, S.C. 29669 (ph 864 243-9699; www.happycowcreamery.com).

years ago I bought a pair of used **Ford** 1715 tractors, which I think are the best tractors ever built. They'll run all day on just a little fuel, and they're easy to work on.

"My Chinese-built **Kama** tractor is poorly built. There are loose bolts everywhere, and the warranty is no good."

Donald Brown, Amissville, Va.: Donald's happy with his 2009 **New Holland** 50/50 4-WD tractor equipped with a floor shuttle transmission. "It's a dependable, well-built tractor with a good view from the cab and simple features. At times the brakes make a loud rubbing noise, but I can live with that."

"My **New Holland** TN 60D 4-WD tractor has a left hand shuttle that goes into gear only when it wants to, which makes it a real nuisance. It once left me stranded in the middle of the road. I've spent about \$2,000 at my dealer trying to solve the problem but nothing has helped. Also, the tractor doesn't have enough road speed and power. If you want to do anything other than work a garden, this tractor is underpowered."

Matt Stewart, Seabeck, Wash.: Matt's satisfied with his 2010 **Stihl** MS250 chainsaw equipped with a 2.77 cu. in. engine and 18-in. bar. "I heat my house primarily with wood and this saw has performed flawlessly. It has plenty of power for big jobs, and the 18-in. bar handles big logs just fine. It also works great for light duty trimming due to its light weight. This is my second Stihl saw, and I'll definitely buy another one when the time comes."

Herbert D. Thompson, Creston, Calif.: Herbert's impressed with his 2012 6,000-kw **Kohler** propane-powered generator equipped with automatic start and stop. "I bought it because my wife has coronary obstructive pulmonary disease and requires oxygen 24 hours a day. This unit will instantly supply power when the electricity fails. It has worked beautifully when we've needed it."

Haskell W. Carr, Twin Falls, Idaho: "My 2011 **EdenPURE** free-standing electric heater is my worst buy. After I bought this heater I had to return it twice and pay \$40 in