

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

it but had to spend \$14 for shipping. The company wouldn't refund my money but sent a replacement model. It didn't work either so I returned it and had to spend another \$14 for shipping. I asked the company for a refund, but they told me they don't offer refunds, just replacements."

Calvin F. Feild, Verden, Okla.: "My 2009 **Crust Buster** 4615 All Plant no-till drill is equipped with 24 openers on 7 1/2-in. spacings. It does an excellent job. I use it to plant wheat, alfalfa, soybeans, and cotton."

Sam Parker, Hemingway, S.C.: "It has about 150,000 miles on it and is my best pickup ever," says Sam about his 2006 **Chevrolet Duramax**. "No major problems. I finally replaced the batteries at about 145,000 miles, and the front brake pads were serviced at about 127,000 miles."

"My **Porter-Cable** finish nailer and **Porter-Cable** crown stapler are both worst buys. I haven't been able to drive even one small box of nails or staples with either one of them. Both units locked up, and I had to spend \$150 on repairs. Then they both locked up again."

Myers Adam, Shoemakersville, Penn.: "My 1968 **Farmall** 656D tractor has almost 6,000 hours on it, but the engine has never

"My Farmall tractor has almost 6,000 hours on it, but the engine has never been overhauled and still uses very little oil."

been overhauled and still uses very little oil. Two years ago the engine started to smoke after I started it up. I thought about overhauling it, but instead I put a can of fuel injector cleaner in the gas tank and then repeated the procedure a second time. Now this tractor starts and runs like new.

"No problems with my 2008 **Chevrolet** Silverado K1500 pickup. This is my fifth Chevy pickup, and they've all worked great."

Jimmy Skipper, Sr., Newton, Ala.: "My 1995 **Wood Mizer** LT40 HD sawmill has about 4,500 hours on it. It has cut more than one million board feet of lumber with only minor problems."

Vincent P. Henderson, San Antonio, Texas: "My 2010 **Stihl** Mini Boss chainsaw equipped with EZ start works better than the old Stihl model I had used for more than 20 years. I can cut mesquite trees with it all day long and do nothing more than sharpen the blade. It's a great chainsaw."

"My **Samsung** French Door refrigerator/freezer with dual ice makers is my worst buy. Reportedly this was a Consumer Digest 'best buy'. The first one I bought wouldn't run so a week later the company sent a replacement. The ice maker is so loud it would wake up the dead. The top ice maker has no 'stop' so it continues to make ice even when the bucket is full. This is a \$2,000 piece of junk."

Larry L. Feese, Kincaid, Kan.: "It's the best preplant harrow and land leveling tool I've ever used," says Larry about his **Kelly** 30-ft. rolling disc harrow (ph 417 865-2100; www.kellyharrows.com). "I can pull this harrow at 8 mph with a 150 hp tractor."

Dan Miller, Rochester, Wash.: Dan's the satisfied owner of a 2003 **Chevrolet** Silverado Duramax diesel pickup equipped with an Allison 6-speed transmission. "It has more than 150,000 miles on it with only one problem, and that problem could have been fixed by installing heavy duty fuel injectors. I use this pickup to pull an 11,000-lb. fifth wheel camper and also to pull a trailer loaded

with my antique Farmall tractors, which weigh about 11,000 lbs. I don't think I've put more than 10,000 miles on it without pulling some kind of trailer. It's a reliable pickup."

Richard A. Jennings, Tazewell, Tenn.: "My 1994 **Chevrolet** SB Silverado 350 pickup has about 200,000 miles on it, yet all I've replaced are the air conditioner compressor and four sets of tires. I've never had to use the spare tire."

"My 1974 **International Harvester** 674 Row Crop diesel tractor is also a best buy, with about 9,000 hours on it. The engine has been overhauled once and the tractor has gone through two clutches. No other problems. I use it to clean chicken houses, rake hay, and feed round bales."

"My 2009 **Superior** 7-ft. sicklebar mower is my worst buy. The sicklebar is weak, which causes the guards to pop off whenever the field is uneven. The guards are expensive."

Stewart G. Ellis, Clear Brook, Va.: "My best buy is my 1974 **Deere** 830 diesel tractor. I paid slightly less than \$4,000 for it. This tractor will run day and night on a tank of fuel. I replaced a clutch eight years ago but that has been the only major repair. Not bad for a machine that's 37 years old."

David Koenig, Quincy, Ill.: David's pleased with his 1996 **New Holland** 1725 4-WD diesel tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "I use this tractor for lots of heavy work, including lifting logs and maintaining terraces. It's very fuel efficient - I can run it all day long and still have fuel in the tank at the end of the day. The little diesel engine in it has amazing power for its size."

Jimmy R. Kelley, Georgiana, Ala.: "We've never had problems with our 1950 **International Harvester** 7 cu. ft. refrigerator. My mom and dad bought it new and brought it home on an IH logging truck."

Randy Hudson, Lorraine, Ill.: "It's the best pickup I've ever owned," says Randy about his 2007 **Dodge** 2500 4-WD heavy duty pickup equipped with a Cummins 6.7-liter diesel engine. "It drives good, looks good, is fuel efficient, and can handle about anything I pull behind it."

Rick Robinson, Fairfield, Iowa: Rick's happy with his 2009 **Ferris** 4500 61-in. zero turn riding mower that's powered by a Caterpillar liquid-cooled diesel engine (www.ferrisindustries.com). "This mower has a spring-over-shock suspension system which makes it comfortable to operate all day long. It's built twice as heavy as other zero turn mowers on the market, because with the spring-over-shock suspension the frame has to be twice as thick. Both of the engine's main seals went out but Caterpillar took care of the problem."

Greg Kropf, Westphalia, Kan.: "I own two 1,200-watt, 2-cycle **ETQ** generators and one 4-cycle 3,500-watt **ETQ** generator (www.easterntools.com) and they all start and work good. However, I wouldn't recommend buying one unless you're good at making carburetor adjustments and minor repairs. The 3,500-watt generator came with a leaky gas tank and a broken air cleaner. I called the company and they sent the necessary parts."

"Several years ago we had the tires on both our hay rake and mower conditioner filled with **Wingfoot** foam at a local Goodyear dealer to prevent flats. It was a huge mistake. This particular foam is extremely heavy, and the bearing and spindles on the rake couldn't handle the excess weight. Since the foam won't come out, the only way to fix the problem was to buy new tires and wheels."

Marcus Klama, Ruth, Mich.: "I use my 1992 **Cub Cadet** 1440 riding mower to cut three acres of grass every year, and all I've replaced is one belt. The mower is now on its third set of blades. I'd definitely buy another



Wayne Dodge's 1962 Allis Chalmers Gleaner E combine has harvested grain for 50 consecutive years.

"Best Buy" Combine At 50 Years And Counting

When Nello Dodge bought a new Allis-Chalmers Gleaner E combine in 1962, it was the first self-propelled combine in his neighborhood near Ellsworth, Wis. When his son, Wayne Dodge harvested oats with it last fall it was no match for today's technology. But he was proud of the faithful old combine, which has harvested grain for 50 consecutive years.

He recently shared the combine's story with readers in the Old Allis News magazine.

Dodge was 12 when his dad brought the combine home. He remembers it being used for weeks harvesting the Dodes' 70 acres as well as many acres for other nearby farmers.

Though it isn't used as much as in years past, he continues the tradition.

"It usually combines about 70 acres a year," Dodge says, though he only had 40 acres to combine in 2011.

The engine has never been overhauled, but 20 years ago he changed seals in the

crankshaft, and he's been cannibalizing parts from two combines owned by a neighbor. He has fixed or replaced the clutch and various internal components, for example.

"But that's the original umbrella from when it was 4 years old," he notes.

Except for one fall when it got stuck in a field where it spent the winter, the combine has been well cared for and stored inside.

Dodge says he isn't sure why his dad was so fond of the combine. When other equipment broke down, he would often trade it in. But when it came to the combine, he always made the necessary repairs to keep it going.

Even though his father has passed away, Dodge plans to keep it running as long as possible.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wayne Dodge, W8436 480th Ave., Ellsworth, Wis. 54011 (ph 715 792-2768).

one."

Dean Van Ness, Danville, Iowa: "My 1991 and 1995 **Chevrolet** S-10 pickups both work great and have required only routine maintenance. One has almost 200,000 miles and the other more than 238,000."

Ken Montag, Dexterville, Wis.: "My 2004 **Classic** outdoor wood burning stove has been trouble-free. It's built rugged and company service has been outstanding. I'd recommend this stove to anyone."

Douglas McLennan, Maxville, Ont.: Douglas nominates his 2008 **Deere** 1590 15-ft. no-till grain drill as his "best buy". "It does a good job and is easy to pull. I had to make a drawbar support for my Deere 2955 tractor because the drill is equipped with a straight hitch. Otherwise, the tractor has no trouble handling the drill."

"I'm well pleased with my **Deere** 720A zero turn riding mower."

Richard K. Harris, St. Joseph, Mo.: "My 2003 **Ford** Ranger pickup has more than 250,000 miles on it but still runs great and looks good. I think it'll go another 250,000 miles. My two **Ford** 1100 tractors are both best buys. I've had one of them for 20 years now."

Merle Solie, Mentor, Minn.: "It makes nice solid bales and is easy to service," says Merle about his **New Holland** BR770 round baler.

Mark Chavers, Fairfield, Texas: "My 2010 **Ford** Flex crossover is fuel efficient and has about 38,000 miles on it with no problems. I bought this vehicle because my wife wanted something that would haul grand kids and "stuff" at the same time."

Jeff Royer, Neola, Iowa: "They're the

best equipment investment I've ever made," says Jeff about the **Ag Leader** SureStop row clutches he installed on his planter (ph 515 232-5363; www.agleader.com). "They reduce the amount of seed needed and raise the yield on end rows because of less overlap. The clutches are operated electrically so no air compressor or air valves are needed. Because they're engaged when no current is applied, the planter rows will still operate if a wiring problem happens during planting. These row clutches weren't hard to install because they don't go on the planter driveshaft like other clutches, which require the driveshaft to be removed for clutch installation."

"I like my **Trimble/Case** IH EZ-Guide 500 GPS lightbar and keep finding new ways to use it. But I'm frustrated by software updates that add an improvement in one area but eliminate other features. Because of the update problems I have to keep different versions of the software, and upgrade and downgrade the monitor multiple times throughout the year depending on what I'm using it for."

"I'm also frustrated by inconsistent documentation."

"Another frustration was lack of support. When I first went to use it with an EZ-Boom rate and section controller, I couldn't get the sprayer boom valves to operate. My dealer had no answers and other dealers were also unable to tell me what was wrong."

Kraig Milam, New Albany, Ind.: Kraig has more than 330,000 miles on his 2002 **GM** 2500 heavy duty 4-WD crew cab pickup equipped with a 6.6-liter diesel engine and Allison transmission. "I drive a minimum

Continued on next page