

## Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

By: Mark Newhall  
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**Jack S. Dawson, Oklahoma City, Okla.:** “I think the **California Bander** is the cheapest, easiest, safest and most hygienic way to castrate animals (ph 800 847-2533; www.inosol.com). I’ve used other, more expensive devices on the market and they work fine. But this device is easy to use and practically indestructible.”

**Rick Loganhill, Versailles, Mo.:** “I use my 2003 **New Holland LS170** skid loader every day and it now has about 12,000 hrs. on it. I’ve replaced the starter and alternator and rebuilt the hydrostatic pump, but otherwise it has been trouble-free.

“I’ve had problems with my **Deere 4024TF 270** diesel engine. At only about 400 hrs., we had to take the engine back to the dealer for repairs not covered by the warranty. They installed a new rack, adjusted pumps and the governor, changed the oil, filters and glow plugs – and then charged me \$3,075.31. What’s more, the engine ran even worse and smoked when I got it back. At about 1,000 hrs., we had to redo the head and then totally rebuild the engine.”

**Frank Petrus, Perry, Ohio:** “My 2008 **Polaris Ranger** all-wheel-drive utility vehicle has saved me a lot of time, money and labor,

heating my house, as well as my garage and shop. I installed it myself and the company was helpful any time I called with a question.”

On the negative side, he lists his **Behlen** automatic cattle waterer. “This waterer has a thermostatically-controlled heating element that isn’t adjustable. As a result, any time the temperature goes below 20 degrees the water freezes. I called the company but was told I’d probably have to ‘help out’ the waterer when it got cold. I ended up adding a 100-watt light bulb to help it out. So much for energy efficiency.”

**Gene Lee, Conifer, Colo.:** Gene has about 320,000 trouble-free miles on his 1995 **GM K2500 Sierra** pickup. “The engine has never been worked on, and all I’ve replaced are the brake pads and tires. I live at an elevation of about 8,500 ft. so I do almost all mountain driving.”

**Roberto Jaramillo, Medanales, New Mexico:** “My 1993 **Dodge 1-ton** pickup equipped with a diesel engine and automatic transmission has about 300,000 miles on it, yet I’ve had to replace only the fuel injection pump and starter.”

**Russ Wrisley, Boonville, N.Y.:** Russ is happy with his **Harbor Freight 1-in.** drive impact wrench. “I’m usually pretty careful about which tools I buy at Harbor Freight – it has to be repairable in my shop. But I’m really impressed with the price and performance of this impact wrench. I paid \$270 for it. I could have easily spent twice that much on another brand and still be swearing at those stubborn lug nuts.

“With temperatures dipping down to 20 degrees below zero, we bought four **Westinghouse** heat lamp bulbs at Tractor Supply Co. (TSC) only to find out the bulbs were all broken or blown. TSC wouldn’t warranty them or exchange them and instead told us to call customer service at Westinghouse. We called them but they never answered the phone. Nowadays, whenever I buy something at TSC I make it a point to have them explain the warranty in detail.”

**Shawn Krause, Zachary, La.:** “My 2004 **Ford F-250 4-WD** pickup equipped with a 6.0-liter Powerstroke engine is a true workhorse, with more than 230,000 miles on it. It has needed only a couple of trips back to the dealer for minor repairs.

“My 2006 **Ford Escape** has about 176,000 miles with only routine maintenance.”

He’s disappointed with his two **Echo** straight shaft weed eaters and an **Echo** gas-powered blower. “I can’t even go one year using these products without some kind of problem. And trying to deal with Home Depot on warranty work is a whole story in itself.”

**Cecil Adams, Moran, Texas:** He owns a 2004 **Ford Explorer**. “At 30,000 miles the company sent me a form offering to extend the factory warranty, so I bought a 75,000-mile or 5-year extended warranty. Last year the vehicle had 101,700 miles on it when the engine locked up so tight a mechanic couldn’t even pry the engine loose. I notified the company, but they said the extended warranty I bought started when the car was manufactured, not at the date or mileage when I bought the warranty. So make sure you read those warranties carefully.”

**Billy W. Key, Clinton, Miss.:** Billy’s impressed with his 2010 **Polaris Ranger 500** utility vehicle with crew cab. “We’ve already put about 160 hrs. on it. It’ll go anywhere on our farm, through creeks, ditches, up steep banks, and across fallen tree trunks and will carry a full load of rocks, dirt, cross ties, or firewood. The 4-WD just keeps on pulling. It has a roomy cab that holds two adults and two children.”

**Charles Davis, Wheeling, W. Va.:** Charles is happy with his 1976 **David Brown 1200** loader tractor. “It starts easy, has a lot of power, and is equipped with a big 6-ft.

# Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

## OPINION

**Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy**  
Send your nominations to:  
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,  
Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use  
the survey form on our website  
at www.FARMSHOW.com,  
or Email your comments to:  
Editor@FARMSHOW.com**

and provided recreational enjoyment for my family and friends. The 40 hp, fuel-injected engine has plenty of power to pull hay and gravity wagons around our farm. I use it to haul 300 to 500 lbs. of feed at a time to our livestock feeders. It also comes in handy for carrying fencing tools, cutting and hauling firewood, and harvesting our garden.

“One winter my Ranger helped me save a few calves born in the back 40. With its all-wheel-drive, two-range transmission, 4-wheel suspension and super traction tires, I was able to drive through more than a foot of snow and over downed branches to rescue the calves.

“My wife uses the rig’s dump box to mix potting soil and to haul yard waste. The grandkids love to ride in it. With its two bench seats, six seat belts and rollbars there’s plenty of room for them.”

**Cacey Jones, Yuma, Tenn.:** “My 2003 **Ford Ranger** pickup has about 262,000 miles but still runs and looks like new. It has required only routine maintenance.”

**Terry Rodman, Jasper, Minn.:** “My **Ferris** zero-turn riding mower equipped with a 72-in. deck can mow as much as a 60-in. deck equipped with a pull-behind 4-ft. mower. I’ve tried operating several other brands of zero-turn riding mowers, but they all rode so rough I couldn’t go for more than a half hour at a time without back trouble. This mower has four-wheel suspension, with adjustable springs on all four shock absorbers to match the operator’s weight. It’s definitely the smoothest riding zero-turn mower I’ve operated. The engine has adequate power to handle any job and the mower can go up to 10 mph.”

**John Behrens, Center Point, Iowa:** John’s satisfied with his **Heat Master 5000** wood boiler furnace (www.heatmasterfurnace.com). “It’s well built and does a great job