

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys



the Teflon slider. I've averaged 10 cords of wood per year."

Terry L. Evans, Oelwein, Iowa: Terry's the satisfied owner of 1993 and 1997 **Ford F-250 Super Duty** pickups, both equipped with 460 cu. in. engines. "Both pickups pull really well. The 1993 model has about 149,000 miles on it but has required only normal maintenance. I use them to pull trailers and to push snow.

"My **Husqvarna 455 Ranger** chainsaw equipped with an 18-in. bar is my worst buy. The oiler didn't do a good job of lubricating the bar, and the chain often came off. I took the saw back to the dealer twice and complained but got nowhere. Later on I learned the drive gear on this saw's oiler is made of plastic and tends to break or slip. I got rid of the saw and bought a **Stihl 30** model, which works twice as good."

Gary Truesdale, Spencerville, Ohio: Gary's disappointed with disc mower blades from **Meg-Mo Systems**. "I used these blades for years with excellent results. But the latest set of blades I got won't lift grass in the mower's tire tracks, which leaves two strips of taller grass on each pass. I called the company three times last year but was unable to resolve the problem, so now I'm switching back to Deere mower blades."

Sandy Jackson, Etowah, Tenn.: "My **Kuhn** mower, tedder and rake are all best buys. My **Skag Turf Tiger** zero turn riding mower is a best buy. I've also had good luck with a **Stihl** chainsaw and a **Haybuster** sod drill."

Avram Grossman, Irvine, Calif.: "For many years I wore Knapp shoes and boots. The company went out of business five years ago, but not before making their product in China for five years. So, for the past 10 years I haven't been able to find a good shoe. Until now. In my opinion **KBFootwear** is the new Knapp Shoes, and they're made in the U.S. (ph 888 445-6277; www.kbfootwear.com). The quality of these shoes and boots is second to none."

Tom Bundrick, Beacon, N.Y.: "I've used my **McCulloch MAC 3200** chainsaw for almost 15 years with no problems. It has only a 14-in. bar so I thought it would balk at larger trees, but I've been able to take down some pretty big trees with it. I replaced the chain after repeated sharpening had left the original chain fairly dull. The saw is equipped with a primer bulb for easy starting, and even on freezing cold mornings it'll usually get going with five or six pulls. I highly recommend this saw for light to medium-sized trees."

Wes Koebnick, Charles City, Iowa: "The 1970's **Clark** forklift I bought used 10 years ago has been trouble-free. I bought it very cheap because the original owner thought the transmission was bad. I found the holes in all the linkages were worn, which is why it wouldn't engage properly. I welded the holes shut and re-drilled them, and now it works like new."

Linda Meyer, Speedwell, Va.: "My husband bought me a 'gadget' for my car — a 1.5-watt solar panel that plugs into the cigarette lighter — and I think it's the best thing since sliced bread. It provides continuous charging of the vehicle's battery and helped my car battery last for 11 years.



The batteries in our Dodge diesel pickup lasted for 10 years. **Harbor Freight** carries this product, and with coupons it usually sells for under \$20. I've given them as presents to people with ATV's, and my neighbor uses his on his field tractor."

Glen Sikorski, Cadott, Wis.: "My **Graetz Mfg.** manure stacker is a well-built, heavy duty machine (ph 920 897-4041; www.graetzmf.com). It costs a fraction as much as a manure pump and is easy to install. Instead of daily spreading, I pile the manure and use a conventional loader and spreader a few times a year. By only using my spreader two or three times a year and then cleaning it up, the spreader should last a lifetime."

Chris Rieber, Glen, Mont.: "My 2007 **Dodge Ram 3500 4-WD** pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter Cummins diesel engine, manual 6-speed transmission, and Bradford-built flatbed is the best pickup I've ever owned. It has had a couple of minor problems, but they were more due to wear than anything else. This pickup starts easy, is fuel efficient, and will tow loads that shouldn't be pulled with a pickup. I installed PRXB Pac brakes, which do a fantastic job of holding back big loads on steep grades."

Roger Kahler, Dunnell, Minn.: "I'm happy with **Seal Lube** seal expander (ph 800 434-9192; www.seallube.com). I used it a year ago on my skid loader's hydraulic drive motor, which leaked badly and was almost impossible to access. Seal Lube stopped the leak, with no problems since then. I highly recommend this product."

Bill Dixon, Livonia, Mich.: "We use our **Maasdam Pow'R Rope Puller** to handle trees, logs, beams and even stuck vehicles



(ph 800 322-4539; www.maasdam.com). It'll pull up to 1,500 lbs. using 1/2-in. rope and can accommodate an unlimited length of rope. My husband and I used it to put up our wind charger and tower at the lake. Very handy.

"We like our **Wagner** airless paint sprayer (www.wagnerspaytech.com). We used it to paint our shop, outbuilding and deck in one day."

Michael Myers, Fredonia, Kan.: Michael's the satisfied owner of a 1985 **Deere 112L** garden tractor. "I use it regularly in our lawn care business. We attach it to a Cyclone Rake leaf collector every fall to collect and clean up leaves. The tractor is powered by a Kawasaki engine that has never been touched. There's no hour meter on the tractor, but we change the oil every couple of months no matter the use."

Neal E. Gingerich, Lamoni, Iowa: "My **Remington 870** 20-gauge Express shotgun is a best buy. I bought it new three years ago with two barrels. I use it to hunt both deer and rabbits."

Vernon Horst, Yelm, Wash.: "I've used my 1962 **International Harvester**

Caterpillar TD9B to log and clear land since it was a year old. I'm now 85 years old but I still use it."

Don Pirkil, Tiffin, Iowa: "My wife and I love our 2010 **Deere Gator** 6-wheeler utility vehicle. We use it to haul wood. It'll go anywhere and is low to the ground so it's easy to get into."

Tim Maus, Duncannon, Penn.: "I bought a **Hobart Handler 210** welder several years ago from Northern Tool. It cost just under \$900 shipped to my door. I've run a few 11-lb. spools of wire through it with no problems. It's a versatile, rugged, dependable welder that's easy to use. I've used it to weld everything from 20-ga. sheet metal to 3/4-in. thick steel plate. I know I've exceeded the duty cycle on a few 90 plus degree days but have yet to kick in the thermal overload circuit breaker.

"My friend bought a **Miller 212** welder (without the spool gun) for quite a bit more than I paid for the Hobart, yet he likes my Hobart better. We took the outer cases off both units and found they're virtually identical inside since Hobart uses Miller components. Hobart's customer service is excellent as well. Consumables can be purchased at TSC or any welding supply shop, which is very convenient. The spool gun works well for aluminum, too.

"My **Harbor Freight** milling cross vise is useless. I don't expect much from Harbor Freight tools, but this tool is bad even by their standards."

John C. Betka, Walkerville, Mont.: "Our **Deere 2320** tractor is okay but has too much plastic on it. Also, there was a mechanical failure on the transaxle at 290 hours but it was eventually repaired under warranty. However, the same problem happened again soon afterward. The dealer denied any responsibility, and Deere refused to help. Both times the failure was due to a housing gasket that was incorrectly installed — once by the factory and once by the dealer. I ended up making the repair myself."

William N. Armstrong, New Burnside, Ill.: "My **Leatherman** Supertool can be used for a lot of different jobs and is built sturdy. I'm so impressed with it that I bought my wife a smaller model."

He isn't happy with his **Ad Tech** mini glue gun. "It takes 15 minutes for the gun to warm up, and then I have to squeeze with all my might just to get a few drops of glue out of it."

Raymond Gaudette, Phillips, Maine: "I bought a used 1964 **Ford 4000** and it's a nice operating tractor. It's equipped with a Select-O-Speed transmission that has a total of 10



forward and reverse gears. Unfortunately, only three forward gears and one reverse gear worked when I bought it. I solved the problem by freeing up an interlock valve between the direct drive clutch and the forward band, so now all the gears work."

Leon Carver, Myrtle Creek, Ore.: "My 2004 **Chevrolet** Colorado 4-door pickup looks nice and rides great. I've put about 220,000 miles on it with no trouble at all. I've never even had to put new brakes on it, and I didn't have to tune up the engine until the pickup had about 180,000 miles on it. I recently bought a 2011 Colorado equipped with a 5-cyl. engine."

Pat Trosk, Wasta, S. Dak.: "My 2009 **Bobcat T300** rubber tracked skid loader is an impeccable machine in every way. It has a huge amount of lifting power and amazing flotation. It will carry two 1,600-lb. round bales at a time over 7-ft. snowdrifts. This machine is fuel efficient and starts at temperatures as cold as 25 degrees below zero without needing a plug-in. It's small enough to fit into short buildings yet has the dozing capacity of a Caterpillar D4. The operator controls work smooth.

"I don't like the newer skid loader models on the market, such as Bobcat's T870 and Caterpillar's C297. They're computerized nightmares with bad eye level visibility, and the computerized systems make them jumpy and dangerous to operate. These companies should do away with the computers and revert back to the pre-Tier 4 control engineering."

James S. Vreeland, Savannah, N.Y.: "My 2004 **Toyota Prius** has about 274,000 miles on it with few problems. I use Syntec synthetic motor oil and change it every 20,000 miles, with filter changes every 5,000 miles. I changed the car's serpentine belt at about 200,000 miles and the spark plugs at about 240,000 miles. It's also fuel efficient, averaging 43 mpg. It's a great car."

Eldon Reiners, Bucyrus, Mo.: "My **Deere X360** riding mower is equipped with power steering, a tilt steering wheel, and hydraulic deck lift. It turns sharp and is a fine machine.

"My **New Holland RB 450** round baler had some minor problems at first but the dealer fixed them, and now it works fine. It's important to have a good battery and charging system on your tractor, because the computer on these balers requires a full 12 volts all the time."

Henry Breukelman, Rosslyn, Ont.: "My 2008 **Ford F-150** pickup is fuel efficient. My 2008 **Ford Taurus** has never been back to the dealer except for filters and oil changes."

Cordavee Heupel, Sturgis, S. Dak.: Cordavee says his 2009 **Deere LA145** riding mower is his "worst buy". "When the grass is a bit on the dry side it builds up under the pulley and belt covers. So far this hasn't started a fire, but the way the material is packed in I can't blow it out. Instead, I have to get down on my hands and knees and pull it out by hand. I could remove the covers from the mower but that wouldn't be safe, either."

Joe E. Schuch, Sisseton, S. Dak.: "My 2006 **Deere L120** garden tractor is built well and has an excellent mower deck. No problems. In 2008 I bought a snowblower for it that also works good. This tractor is easy to handle because it has a hydrostatic transmission so I don't have to shift gears."

Lynn Buss, LeMars, Iowa: "It does an outstanding job with no breakdowns or major problems so far," says Lynn about his 2001 **Oxbo CP100** sweet corn puller. "This machine imitates the way a person hand picks sweet corn and has eliminated a large portion of my picking labor. The company delivered the machine on time, even though I ordered it on short notice. No damage at all to the corn."

Vernis Leger, Kaplan, La.: "I use my **Honda 4-wheeler** to check on my rice and soybean fields and to check on my cattle and fence lines. I also use it to pull my hay rack, which frees up a tractor."

Fred Hyer, Paola, Kan.: "My 1996 **Massey Ferguson 253** front wheel drive tractor was made in Great Britain. The only problem I've had was with a power steering pump, which was replaced under warranty. This tractor has more than 13,000 hours on it. I've used it to do mowing, raking, baling, logging and numerous other jobs with no problems."