

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

work. I've never seen paint with so much pigment. One can of this paint will cover several times as much area as DeRusto or some of the other big brand name paints, and in a fraction of the time. The gloss colors shine so bright, you may have to wear shades.

"This product comes in gallons or spray cans. They have colors for all the brand name tractors and machinery. The light gray primer covers like a flame thrower, but never runs. It'll cover so well, you'll be amazed. This is the best paint I've ever used and it's reasonably priced.

"In freezing cold or rainy weather, when you wouldn't dare try to paint with a spray gun, we've painted entire tractors in our shop with three to four cans of this paint. It does a great job on rusty tractors, implements, trucks, cars, combines, planters, plows, and more."

Brian Harp, Blossvale, N.Y.: "The 1998 **New Holland 575** small square baler I bought used three years ago is my best buy. It replaced my 30-year-old IH 430 baler, which was a good machine but lacked the capacity we needed. The New Holland model will eat a huge amount of hay and has a wide pickup to get all the hay in heavy windrows. I read some literature that claims you can make up to 200 bales per hour with this machine. But I can testify that we've made 435 bales per hour. I'm sure New Holland will love to hear that."

Tom E. Weekley, Guysville, Ohio: "My **Deere JS 20**, 6.75 hp self-propelled lawn mower is my worst buy. The discharge chute plugs up constantly if the grass is wet or if it's more than 3 in. tall. It's poorly designed."

Carl Gawenus, Easton, Ct.: "I bought my 1945 **Gravelly** walk-behind tractor used back in 1942 and used it to mow grass and brush until 1960. It's still in use in Montana. I bought a new model in 1960 and that one is still in use in Alberta. No problems with either one. They're unbeatable.

"I bought my 1956 **Massey Ferguson** tractor used for \$2,500 in 1980. The tractor had been in a barn fire and was reconditioned. I switched it over to 8 volts. I've used this tractor for plowing, mowing, and logging work with no problems."

David Bush, Floodwood, Minn.: "This tractor is very maneuverable with good visibility. It's also inexpensive to operate," says David about his 1981 **International Harvester 186 Hydro** equipped with an International Harvester 2450 front-end loader.

Tommy W. Blackston, Mauk, Ga.: "I paid \$2,500 for my 1994 **Mercury Grand Marquis** 9 years ago with about 100,000 miles on it. Now it has more than 250,000 miles. It still has the original engine and rides and drives as good as the day I bought it. I don't know if Ford made the right decision when they killed off this model."

Charlie Knigge, Omro, Wis.: A dairy producer with a free-stall barn, Charlie



recently told *Country Today* that he likes his **Lely Juno** automated feed pusher (www.Lely.com). Lely is a Dutch company, and Knigge is using the unit on a trial basis.

The Juno is a battery-powered unit that automatically drives up and down the feed alley in a barn, sensing the distance to the feed wall and pushing loose feed toward the cows. The owner programs it for direction, distance and time of operation. The 1,500-lb.

unit will stop if it hits a person or other solid object.

The unit minimizes feed waste, but also stimulates feeding activity throughout the day and night, which leads to increased production. It keeps fresh feed in front of the cows all day.

Daniel D. Miller, Jr., Quaker City, Ohio: "I like my **Fluke 175** multimeter (ph 877 766-5412; www.optimumenergy.com). The handheld unit comes with a large, easy-to-read display and is backlit for work in dim areas. A magnetic hanger is available.

"I have several antique farm tractors, and whenever I have electrical problems with them my Fluke meter helps me find out what's wrong. I use it for all kinds of other electrical problems, too. It sells for less than \$250."

Dale Schmidt, Standish, Mich.: "I mounted a set of Chinese-made **Akuret** tires on my skid loader last August. We use this skid loader to move round bales and to clean hog pens and do miscellaneous chores around our farm. After only about 20 hours of use, the tires are visibly worn down. My guess is that in another month I'll have to buy a new set of tires. I bought these tires because I needed a set of tires right away and they were all the dealer had in stock. I should have waited a few days for Titan tires, which are still made in the U.S. I had previously used some Titan tires that lasted about 8 years."

Alex Thomson, Woodbury, Ct.: "My **AGCO/Massey Ferguson** model 1617 hay tedder is my best buy. I bought it new based on my friend's experience with an older version. This hydraulic-fold machine is well built and goes down the road without swaying. It's the perfect size to use with a 10-ft. mower conditioner. It's built much heavier and better than a Sitrex 520."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his **DeWalt 4 1/2-in. angle grinder**. "I bought this grinder at a special tool sale at the Stanley works factory in New Britain, Conn. Stanley recently merged with Black & Decker/DeWalt. Within the first half hour of use the grinder got hot and made binding sounds, and it would come to almost an instant stop whenever the trigger was released. This is a Chinese-made tool. It's disappointing to pay extra for an American sold, Chinese-made item that is of substandard quality."

Earl D. Marshall, Decatur, Ala.: "I haven't had any problems with my 2000 **Deere 4100** loader tractor—all I do is change the battery and filters. The front-end loader is really useful.

"One of my worst buys was a **Deere** mulcher and leaf bagger that I bought to use with this tractor. It didn't fit the tractor at all. A Deere dealer kept the bagger for a full month without fixing it. I've had the unit three years but haven't used it once."

James D. Fraser, Edgerton, Alta.: "The 1977 **Versatile 825** tractor I bought last spring is my best buy. This tractor replaced a 1968 **Versatile 145** model, which was also a great tractor. Our **Versatile 750** and 276 tractors have also been excellent workhorses.

"Our 1993 **Dodge 3/4-ton** pickup equipped with a diesel engine has about 260,000 miles on it, with no problems."

Douglas Creswell, Mount Airy, Md.: A 1987 **Ford** loader tractor purchased used and equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine rates as Douglas's "best buy". "This tractor runs great and steers easy even though it doesn't have power steering. It has plenty of power to operate my Ford brush mower on hilly ground. It also has great brakes and a roomy, comfortable cab. I love this tractor.

"My 2009 **Frigidaire** upright freezer was so loud you could hear it from one floor above. It turned out the noise was caused by

an internal plastic cover sheet/panel that was vibrating. The Frigidaire factory provides a repair kit."

Lorne McNaughton, McCreary, Man.: "I'm well pleased with my 2009 **Ford Ranger** pickup. It gets about 35 mpg."

Marjorie Birtwhistle, Winchester, Ind.: She's happy with her **Burn Right** mini incinerator (Burn Right Products; ph 262 227-5727; www.burnrightproducts.com). "I found this incinerator on the internet when I



was looking for a better way to burn trash," says Marjorie. "I found that it does everything the company claims. I've watched as the material burns and, although flames do come out, with minute pieces of ash, there are no flowing embers or big pieces of ash that escape. Household trash and yard farm trash burn fast and safely, with little or no smoke."

Replaceable stainless steel angle grates hold burnables in the air and off the ground, which allows incineration to occur from the bottom. Strategically located holes in the grates increase air flow into the burning chamber.

"Burn barrels and homemade incinerators don't meet government safety recommendations, whereas our products not only meet but also exceed government standards on making homemade incinerators," says Ron Wilfer, president, Burn Right Products.

A 42 in. high, 22 in. dia. unit sells for \$379 plus S&H. A 35 in. high, 22 in. dia. unit sells for \$349 plus S&H.

Wayne M. Hagen, Turtle Lake, Wis.: "I bought my **Empyre** outside wood burning stove with a 20-year warranty. After 4 years, it started leaking its special anti-freeze that sells for about \$25 per gallon. I contacted the dealer, who sent out a repairman. He couldn't fix it. In the meantime, the dealer went out of business so I was referred to another dealer. He came out and looked the situation over, then told me that I was running the stove either too hot or too cold. I contacted the manufacturer but they wouldn't honor the warranty, as the second dealer had told them there was nothing wrong with my stove and that the problem was due to operator error.

"I know the stove still leaks anti-freeze because I have to keep adding fluid whenever I use it. This company's warranty isn't worth the paper it's written on."

Robert Klinkkammer, Anamosa, Iowa: "My 2006 **Chrysler** Town and Country van rides nice and is fuel efficient. This is the third one I've owned over the years.

"My 1976 **Allis Chalmers 185** tractor is economical to operate and has never had a complete overhaul. No problems."

Tim Hadley, Edgerton, Mo.: "I like my **Scag** commercial zero turn riding mower (www.scag.com). We use it to mow places

where we previously used a tractor, and go 12 mph. It has more than 1,000 hrs. on it so far with no problems."

Roy Huntington, Joplin, Mo.: "We do a lot of small-lot logging on our land, so I bought a **Homelite 22-in.** chainsaw at Home Depot. It cost only about \$200 so I should have known better. After less than one day, it had essentially burned up and wouldn't run. The brake was locked and it smelled like burning plastic. The local service rep said the saw wasn't worth repairing so I tossed it on the junk heap. Then I bought my first **Stihl** chainsaw, and now I own three—14, 16, and 22-in. models—and they're all best buys. They start easy, run strong, and are easy to maintain. After two years of use, they aren't even slowing down at all. I do wish they'd improve the gas and oil caps on these saws, as they're hard to get tight at times.

"My 2010 **Deere 4120** loader tractor is a great machine. I had a Deere 3320 before that was always lugging down and I kept wishing for a bigger machine. The 4120 has plenty of power and a comfortable ride. It's simply a great tractor."

Kenneth McMillan, Williamsburg, Iowa: Kenneth nominates his 1994 **Chevrolet S-10** pickup as his "best buy". "It has required only routine maintenance and always runs well, even in the coldest weather. The engine and drivetrain are still in great shape. I thought about trading it in for a Chevrolet Colorado, but the S10 is more fuel efficient."

David Klemme, Oklahoma City, Okla.: David uses his 2007 **New Holland TC40A 4-WD** loader tractor and 6-ft. bush hog to do subcontracting work for developers and lawn maintenance people. "These machines have never let me down. I've logged 2,400 hrs. on them at \$40 or more per hour, which is a better return on my investment than the stock market. And weeds keep growing no matter what the economy is like."

Richard Barngrover, Wakarusa, Kan.: "I'm well satisfied with my 2005 **Ford F-150** longbed pickup equipped with a 4.6-liter engine. It has more than 113,000 miles on it but has required only routine maintenance. It'll carry 3,000 lbs. of beans on the highway without swaying. I traded in a 1997 **Ford F-150** with about 212,000 miles, and I had never changed the spark plugs, hoses or belts. It still got about 20 mpg on the highway when I traded it."

Kim Jones, Pearce, Ariz.: "My **Monolithic Dome** home is a best buy (ph 972 483-7423; www.monolithic.com). It costs only about 30 percent as much to heat and cool as a conventional home. There's no roof to blow off in a storm, and it's nearly sound proof. I like the expansive ceilings, too."

Michael Bradley, Auburn, Ill.: Michael's impressed with his 2005 **Swisher Trail Mower** equipped with a 44-in. deck. "By hooking this mower behind my 2008 18 1/2 hp, 42-in. cut Sears Craftsman riding mower I can cut a path 86 in. wide, minus a 6-in. overlap. It makes mowing my five acres of pasture and yard a fast and easy job. The umbrella on top of the machine helps, too.

"Unfortunately, my 2005 10 1/2 hp **Swisher Trail Mower** is my worst buy. Two years after buying it I had to replace the bearings on one of the spindles, and then just a few months ago I had to replace the bearings on the other spindle. Once I turn this machine off in hot weather it won't start again unless I let it cool down in the shade for a couple of hours. I thought maybe the coil was bad so I replaced it, but that didn't help. So now I just leave the machine running until I'm done using it."