

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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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
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Jerry Ackermann, Lakefield, Minn.: “The **PhiBer** Hay Farmer windrow merger is no longer in production, and that’s a shame for medium-sized hay producers like me. We have around 400 acres of hay, and the Hay Farmer is just the right size. PhiBer is a good company, but their new merger is designed for really big hay operations.

“The Hay Farmer is adjustable from 14 to 18 ft. It’ll take two windrows and almost stand them up on their sides so their bottoms are to the outside and their tops to the middle. The two pickup wheels have 572 plastic tines each that gently pick the hay up and lay it on the conveyors. It’ll merge three windrows, but the center one doesn’t get turned. When merging two windrows, we can cover about 20 acres per hour with it.

“When I first bought it, I used a V-rake on half a field and the Hay Farmer on the other half. When I finished, I walked back and saw all the leaves on the ground where it had been raked. But there were no leaves on the ground where I used the merger.

“Dairymen like hay handled by the merger better, too. They don’t like ash count, and it goes up with a rake, because the rake kicks up dirt.”

Wayne Wuest, Columbus, Neb.: “My 2005 **Campbell Hausfeld** Farmhand 115 mig/flux core welder works equally well with Mig or flux core wire and has never jammed or overheated. It even kept working after a trailer fell on it.

“My **Wagner** Pro duty power painter resulted in the noisiest and messiest painting experience I’ve ever had. This unit is heavy, drips all over, and loses prime every time I take my finger off the trigger. The overspray is horrible and makes cleanup a real chore. I’m going back to using my brush and pail. At least then I can listen to the radio all day.

“I like my **Brother P-Touch** PT 1830 thermal desktop label printer (ph 888 890-3266; www.ptouchlabels.com). It’s easy to use and I can make one label or many, with lots of options so I can stick a label on almost anything or anywhere. The cartridges for it cost a lot, though.”

Rick Neubauer, Cashmere, Wash.: “It’s not a pretty gun but it shoots great and never jams,” says Rick, pleased with his 2009 **Hi Point** C9 9 mm Luger pistol. “It’s priced at only \$139. Who else makes a brand new semi-automatic pistol for \$139?”

Dennis Divine, Joplin, Mo.: “My 2006 **Honda** CR-V is the perfect vehicle for rural residents and commuters who need a vehicle with excellent reliability, good fuel economy, and all-weather transportation. I bought it as a low-mileage used car this year, and it has remarkable cargo capacity. Also, the fit and finish on it are outstanding – not a single rattle or squeak.

“This vehicle has a fuel-efficient Honda Civic engine that approaches 30 mpg. It has also earned 5-star crash ratings for safety and has front-wheel drive with traction control. This is the first import vehicle I’ve owned and I’m definitely impressed with Honda’s quality standards.”

Mick Maxwell, Lillooet, B.C.: “I like my 1996 **Dodge** Ram pickup equipped with a 12-valve Cummins diesel engine. It gets about 23 ½ mpg and has a lot of power for passing and towing, etc. I think it’s the best looking pickup ever made.

“My **Husqvarna** 340 chainsaw is lightweight and inexpensive. Falling pine beetles have killed a lot of trees in our area, including big cottonwoods, so we’ve used this saw a lot to cut firewood. It also works good for removing tree limbs.

“My **Makita** chain mortiser is a big time saver. It lets me cut mortises quickly and accurately and is easy to use. It’s ideal for timber framing work.”

Alan Stone, Sundre, Alberta: “It’s a good all-around machine,” says Alan about his 2002 **Suzuki** Eiger 400 4-wheeler equipped with a standard transmission. I’ve used it a lot for herding cattle, fixing fences, plowing snow, hauling bales, skidding firewood, spraying weeds, trail riding and numerous other tasks. Yet I haven’t had a single problem with it. It has required only routine maintenance.

“My **Poulan** 3314 chainsaw starts and runs different every time I use it – usually poorly. One time it floods, and the next time it’s starving for fuel. I almost wear my arms out pulling on the starting rope. Also, the starter rope gets caught in the winding assembly and won’t come out.

“On the other hand, my **Poulan** 4218 chainsaw starts and runs good.”

Fredrick J. Shearin, Sanford, N.C.: A 2007 **Kiotti** DK35SE tractor equipped with a KL351 front-end loader rates as Fredrick’s “worst buy”. “This tractor has 312 hours on it but has been in the dealer’s shop for about the same amount of time. The hydraulic system burned up, and the loader still blows seals even after the cylinder arms were replaced at my expense. They wouldn’t

Andy Valentine, Plains, Mont.: “With nearly 450,000 miles on it, my **Chevy** S-10 has been a real best buy. It’s always been driven pedal to the floor and has traveled from Alaska to Mexico and east to Minn.

“Real mileage is probably closer to 500,000, as I replaced the original 14-in. rims



with 15-in. rims and bigger tires at 130,000 miles. I’ve replaced a few things like the front coil springs and rear leaf springs, brake rotors and drums, all at 300,000. I’m currently on my fourth transmission.

“At 332,000 miles, I had the engine rebuilt from a 2.8 L to a 3.1 with a longer stroke. That bumped mileage by about 2 mpg.

“It’s a tough truck. I once drove it for 70 miles with the engine full of coolant before I discovered the problem. I flushed it with diesel and put it back together. I had planned to change the oil and filter again a few days later, but added another 3,000 miles before doing so. Oil change intervals have varied from 3,000 to many as 12,000 miles.

“It has packed heavy loads over the years to the point where the rear axle bottomed out on the bumper stops. Yet most of the front-end joints are original with only a few items replaced.

“After hitting several deer, I made a ‘deer bumper’ for the truck out of about \$900 of heavy aluminum pipe and steel plate.”