

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

"My 2007 **Poulan** 18-in. Wildthing chainsaw is my worst buy. It leaks bar oil whenever it isn't being used and it's also hard to start. If it does start, it's hard to keep it running. It doesn't have much power, either."

**Joseph Barrett, Live Oak, Florida:** Joseph's happy with his 2003 **Deere** LT 190 lawn tractor equipped with an automatic transmission and 48-in. deck. "After using this machine for five years I recently replaced the belts, spark plugs, and blades for the first time. I change the oil and filter regularly."

**Peyton E. Smith, Covington, Tenn.:** Peyton's pleased with his 2005 **Toyota** Prius hybrid car. "Previously I owned a 2000 Prius and liked it. I traded it in for the new model because the new one has more amenities, such as side air bags and cruise control. Both cars were excellent with outstanding fuel mileage of 50 to 55 mpg on the highway and 40 to 45 mpg in the city. I've put a total of 95,000 miles on these cars with only minor problems, and they were covered by the warranty."

**John Marquardt, Tigerton, Wis.:** "Our 1999 **Chevy** Ventura van is dependable and fuel efficient. We've put 288,500 miles on it, changing the engine oil at 3,000 miles and transmission fluid at about 50,000 miles. Recently we replaced the 1999 model with a 2001 Ventura."

**Chester R. Wallace, Belle Chasse, La.:** "My 2007 **Staber** clothes washing machine, a stainless steel commercial large load model, is my worst buy. First, the delivery from UPS was a nightmare. Then once the machine was delivered and I hooked it up, I found that I couldn't wash my queen-size comforter because it won't fit in the machine. The stainless steel water hoses installed from the factory were cross-threaded and leaked. The outside of the washer drum is growing mold and slime on it and stinks."

"Recently we started the machine up and came back to find it had stayed in the spin cycle for six straight hours. When we called the company to return the machine, we were told we'd have to pay to ship it back and we'd have to pay a 'restocking fee'. So we're stuck with it and have had to resort to washing big stuff elsewhere."

**Roy E. Miller, Tamms, Ill.:** "I've never been satisfied with my **Belton** hearing aids. I gave the company a check for \$4,000 but they refused to refund any money. I made more than 20 trips back to their office, but they couldn't get the hearing aids adjusted correctly. I'd like to know if anyone else has had problems with this company."

**Thomas F. Miller, Trinidad, Colorado:** "A couple years ago I bought a **New Holland** TL100A tractor which is my best buy. It's easy to handle and is fuel efficient, and the cab offers a good view."

**Richard L. Wilgus, Burkeville, Texas:** "It hauls and pulls more than any other ATV I've ever owned," says Richard, pleased with his 2005 **Polaris** Ranger 4-wheeler. "This machine is tough and never seems to break down. Also, it's fast and easy on fuel."

**Fred V. Gustoff, Manito, Ill.:** Fred isn't happy with his **Hardi** Navigator sprayer equipped with a 45-ft. boom. "The first time I tried to use this sprayer, the plastic pipes on the pump broke. I had 550 gallons of spray in the tank with no way to unload. I had to get another sprayer to get the work done. It took the dealer two weeks to repair the pump."

"Later on, two 8-ft. plastic pipes inside the tank popped off. I had to haul it 44 miles back to the dealer to get it repaired. Evidently the plastic can't take the pump's pressure. It cost me more than \$300."

**Gerald Shaw, Manchester, Mich.:** "My 2005 **Kubota** L-2800 8 by 4 tractor is well-

built and is easy on fuel. The transmission required a minor adjustment at 100 hours, but the work was done at no charge and the machine was returned the next day. I'd buy another one without question."

"My **Mighty Mac** pto-driven brush chipper is a best buy. I've used it on thousands of tree limbs and brush, yet the teeth are still sharp. It's a perfect machine."

**Art Malone, Lake Jackson, Texas:** "My 2007 **Stihl** MS 260 and 1987 **Stihl** 012 chainsaw are both best buys. The 012 model always starts and runs well, and the 2007 model is just as reliable. I don't like all the plastic that's on the new saw, but that's how everything is made today."

**James B. Robertson, North Myrtle Beach, S. C.:** "My 1995 **Kioti** LK 3054 tractor equipped with a **Woods** backhoe is my worst buy. I paid \$20,250 for it. With only 54 hours on the tractor the clutch went out, and it happened again at 215 hours. There were also major problems with the front axle and wheels falling off."

**T.A. Sampson, Cane Hill, Ark.:** "My **DR** Versa-Pro Z-mower is my best buy. I have several other DR products and don't have enough words of praise for this company and its high quality line of U.S.-made equipment. This riding mower is unique in that the control panel can be flipped so I can reach in under tree lines or tricky places where I wouldn't want to be riding for safety reasons."

"My 2007 **Country Mfg.** model 600 spreader breaks down on a regular basis. It seems like the company has sent me a replacement for every moving part on it. Belts and chains fall off regularly, and the chains are so badly corroded I don't think they'll last much longer."

**Jerry Misek, Elizabeth, Ill.:** "The 2001 **Woodmizer** LT-40 hydraulic sawmill I bought used in 2005 is my best buy. This sawmill is easy to operate and very accurate. It requires very little maintenance and if problems do occur, the company's support staff quickly responds. The trailer package makes it easy to move from site to site."

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**Chad Travis, Drasco, Ark.:** "My 2005 **Hypertherm** plasma cutter has reduced my acetylene use a lot (GTS-Welco, Inc., ph 800 942-1148; www.gts-welco.com). This plasma cutter has the ability to cut stainless steel and cast iron and will cut through a 1 1/2-in. dia. steel shaft. It works fast and is fun to operate. I installed a Motor Guard air filter on it which was worth the money. It's basically a roll of toilet paper in a canister that traps dirt and moisture, which saves burning out tips."

"The hay cover tarp I bought from **Missouri Hay Tarps** is my worst buy. The tarp failed shortly after it was installed and was ripped to shreds in the wind. This tarp was really nothing more than the kind of poly tarp you can buy at any chain store, just bigger. The company did send me a replacement, but it didn't work any better than the first one."

**Robert S. Horne, Rural Retreat, Va.:** Robert likes his 2007 **Ryobi** BC-30 "start plus" weed whacker equipped with an expand-it attachment system. I have the heavy duty brush cutter, and string trimmer heads. "The brush cutterhead cuts tall grass without tangling and will also cut through brush up to 1 in. in dia. The string trimmer works great

for regular grass trimming."

"My 2004 **Honda** XR 2500 pressure washer equipped with an OHC 5 hp engine is my worst buy. The engine is difficult to start in cold weather. Also, the water pump seized up and ruptured the shaft."

**Jack Davis, Lincoln City, Oregon:** "My 2005 **DR** Field & Brush mower equipped with a 17 hp engine is my best buy. I use it to mow my pasture which has a lot of skunk cabbage in it. I've mowed in 2 in. of standing water, but the mower never hesitated once. That's when I was convinced this is a great piece of machinery. I've since purchased several other pieces of DR equipment, including a generator which uses the same power head; a DR trimmer/mower for mowing along fence lines; and a 6-ton wood splitter. If the company has what I need, I'll buy from them first."

**Enos L. Holloman, Ahoskie, N.C.:** "My 2003 **Deere** LX 277 riding mower has never failed to start and is my best buy. It has more than 360 hours on it with no problems and still has the original battery."

"My 2001 **GM** 4-WD pickup is dependable and a best buy. I replaced the tires at about 47,000 miles and the battery when the pickup was five years old. It now has about 55,000 miles on it."

**Neil L. Dunagan, Spokane Valley, Wash.:** "My 2000 **Dodge** D-3500 1-ton pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine is my best buy. This pickup is fuel efficient, rides like a car, and pulls my 24,000-lb. tandem axle trailer like a dream. I've owned Chevys and Fords in the past, but this is my fourth Dodge and by far is the best."

**Robert and Bernardine Specht, Monmouth, Iowa:** "The 1990 **Yamaha** 80 cc ATV I bought used in 1997 is my best buy. It runs well and has required only one muffler repair. I use it mainly for yard work with a trailer."

"My 2000 **AGCO** lawn tractor is my worst buy. When it was four years old the engine had to be replaced. Recently, the transmission failed. Wire got wound up tightly around the driveshaft. Any repairs are very expensive. One redeeming feature is the deck is easy to remove for cleaning."

**Eldon Tainter, Monticello, Florida:** "I'm well pleased with my 2006 **Deere** 5203 loader tractor. It runs well with no hydraulic leaks and no breakdowns. It has plenty of power to operate my 6-ft. Bush Hog and 6-ft. loader bucket."

"My 2006 **Cub Cadet** LT 1554 riding mower equipped with a 54-in. deck is a best buy. It has plenty of power and cuts evenly."

**Bill Gitter, Coldwater, Miss.:** "My **Kubota** B8200 tractor starts and runs good, is easy on fuel, and is the right size for yard work. I use it with a finishing mower and it does a good job. I also own a **Kubota** L-310 model that's as tough as iron."

**Lloyd Wrentmore, Logan, Ohio:** "It uses less fuel than any tractor I've ever owned," says Lloyd, happy with his 1967 **David Brown** I200A diesel tractor that he bought used in 1988. "I've put one set of 18.4 by 30 rear tires on it, one set of brakes and fuel filters, a new hydraulic filter, new batteries, and a new starter solenoid last year. It doesn't have any heat plugs on it as it starts off compression. In cold weather I just give it a little shot of ether."

**David Thomas, Dale, N.Y.:** "It's a comfortable car to drive - easy on gas, quiet, and just about maintenance-free," reports David about his 1999 **Mercury** Sable LS.

A chisel set that he bought at **Harbor Freight** rates as his "worst buy". "The chisels broke under pressure and are poorly made."

**Gale Oswald, Milford, Neb.:** Gale nominates his 2007 **Nissan** Versa mini SUV as his "best buy". "It has a comfortable ride, with no problems. Two years ago we drove it to Phoenix, Arizona and back. It has a roomy interior and best of all, it's more fuel efficient than what's posted on the sticker."

**Mark Snider, Cle Elum, Wash.:** Mark's happy with his **Fluke** 73 III Multimeter (Everett, Wash. 800 443-5853; http://us.fluke.com). "The settings are easy to read. It's simple to use and I can hear the tones."

"My **Solder It** mini torch is my worst buy. The lighting mechanism quit working the second time I used it. I continued to use it, lighting it with a cigarette lighter for a short time, until it quit working altogether."

**Robert Stewart, Lapel, Ind.:** "The **Outback** S Lite guidance system I bought last April is my worst buy. I never could get it to work although I kept trying all summer. The problem was that it kept dropping the signal. I contacted the company last August and was given a repair order number. I shipped it Sept. 1 with the RO number on the outside of the package as per their instructions. I insured it with USPS and they said the repair facility in Hiawatha, Kansas, received it on Sept. 4. I was told to expect it returned in five working days."

"I called them about three weeks later but they had no record of it. The problem was that the name was misspelled on the original invoice. I corrected that and asked them to check their records for both spellings. The company was supposed to contact the dealer to determine the serial number, which isn't on the original shipping box. It has now been 50 days since I shipped it, with nothing to show for my \$1,000 investment."

**Ted Boice, Great Falls, Montana:** "Several years ago I bought a **Sears Craftsman** 19.2-volt driver drill set for about \$100. I really liked its performance and used it almost every day. However, a year or so ago both batteries quit charging so I headed down to Sears to get a couple of new ones. I was told they don't handle batteries for 'older' drills, and that I'd have to go to a service center across town. They wanted \$74 for a pair of batteries, which I wasn't willing to pay."

"Then I went to Sam's Club and bought two **Kawasaki** 19.2-volt drills, four batteries, and two chargers for less than \$80. I love them and use them all the time. I'll never buy another electric tool with the Craftsman name on it."

**Brian Pahl, Apple Valley, Minn.:** "We bought a **Pixall** Super Jack corn picker for picking fresh market sweet corn (Oxbo Corp., ph 800 836-4336; www.oxbocorp.com). This machine does an excellent job of picking corn without bruising it, and it leaves flag leaves on the cob that are attractive to the customer. I've never gotten stuck in wet soil with this machine. Also, it's quiet and doesn't break down very often. The only limitation is that it won't pick up down corn, but I've made some modifications that help with that problem."

**Gerard E. Quелlette, Richmond, Maine:** "My 2007 **Cub Cadet** UTV side-by-side 4-WD garden tractor equipped with a 20 hp Kohler engine wouldn't quit dieseling in hot weather. At slow speeds it jerked all the time because of a variable speed belt. Also, the transmission was hard to shift. The tractor was in the shop for almost six months. Both the dealer and the company said they couldn't fix it because there was nothing wrong, so a year ago I traded for a **Kubota** side-by-side 4-WD RTV equipped with a 22 hp diesel engine. We've used it hard to haul firewood without a single problem. We love it."