

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

"My **DR** 6-ton wood splitter broke so they gave me another one, but that one broke, too. Now they've replaced the second one so we'll see how it works. I'm starting to think I want my money back!"

Daniel and Lea Padgett, Kings Mountain, Ky.: "The 2007 **Worksaver** hay unroller I bought for \$1,400 is my best buy. It lets me ration my hay more precisely which results in less waste. Unrolling the bale also allows me to distribute the hay around my fields, instead of having to concentrate it in a muddy area around a hay wagon as I did in the past. As a result I can strategically place manure where I need it the most."

Robert E. Schlake, Doniphan, Mo.: "Last summer I bought a **Mantis** rototiller which I really like. When it arrived I didn't think much about it until I began using it. This little rototiller tore up our hard clay ground with no trouble at all. It's easy to start and also easy to operate between the rows."

Murray Mazerolle, Upper Kingsaleur, New Brunswick: "My 2004 **Toyota** Matrix all-wheel drive is an excellent vehicle. No problems."

"The **Ford** 4000 52 hp tractor I bought used 20 years ago still works great. It's well-geared in all speed ranges."

Francis Henderson, Brinston, Ontario: "We use our **New Holland** 160 skid steer loader every day for jobs such as cleaning feed yards, loading bales, and picking rocks. We use four different quick-tach buckets with it."

"Our **Bodco** motorized silage cart is only 1 1/2 years old but runs like it's about 25 years old. The feeder chain breaks because it runs too hard and fast. Now the paint is coming off."

Lola Lang, Mt. Vernon, Wash.: "It runs beautifully and performs like a champion," says Lola about her "best buy" 2006 **Kubota** M8540 75 hp tractor. "I use it on my horse farm to move manure, round bales, haul firewood, clear brush. It's a real time saver."

"My **Jimma** 42 hp tractor, also known as a Hobby Horse, is my worst buy. I was promised the moon by the dealer who sold me this lemon. He said this tractor could meet my every need. Instead this tractor has broken down many times and I've found it can't do

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my farm chores. The dealer gave my name to other potential customers. He told me that if I would give them a good reference he would pay me \$150 to say good things about the tractor if called."

John Dyke, Morrison, Ill.: A 1988 **Deere** 430 yard tractor equipped with a diesel engine and 72-in. mower deck rates as John's "best buy". "This tractor has about 1,800 hours but still runs like new. The deck is perfectly designed. I also use a 54-in. angled scraper blade and a 3-pt. mounted sprayer with it. It's an awesome setup."

David L. Haertling, Altenburg, Mo.: David nominates his 2007 **Kubota** 9540 tractor equipped with a front-end loader and cab as his "best buy". "It has 372 hours on it and does everything I ask it to do. I put 400 lbs. of weights on back, which results in a nice balance of power and weight."

Glenn Allen, Mt. Vernon, Ohio: "I like my **Hitachi** 12-in. compound sliding miter saw equipped with a digital readout. I had owned an American brand, but it had a de-

fect so I returned it to the dealer and got the **Hitachi**. It has a lot of power for cutting at maximum depth, and the angle adjustments are easy to make. The digital readout is handy for making small adjustments."

"My 2006 **Ford** F-250 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6-liter diesel engine rates as my worst buy. The engine developed a bad hesitation if I tried to pull out too fast. I took the pickup back to the dealer several times for reprogramming. It works better now but still has slight delays. It gets 10 to 12 mpg pulling a trailer, which I don't think is very good. I do like how this pickup rides, and the seats are comfortable."

"When the pickup was new I had a **Scorpion** bed liner applied, which turned out to be a waste of money. The bed liner wasn't applied as heavily as it should have been. As a result, things slide around on it and the bed liner material easily peels off."

Paul T. Buckner, Von Army, Texas: Paul says his Western Safety auto darkening welding helmet made by **Chicago Electric** and sold by Harbor Freight is his "best buy". "My father bought this welding helmet for me almost two years ago and it has held up to frequent use both at work and at home. I've accidentally dropped it several times but it still works great. The adjustable darkness feature works great when switching from fine TIG work to heavy stick work. And you can't beat the price."

Fred Meyer, Chagrin Falls, Ohio: Fred's the satisfied owner of a **Steiner** 4-WD garden tractor (www.steinertrf.com; ph 866 469-1242). "I owned a **Kubota** before, but this tractor will pull more and push more snow without tearing up the grass. I can switch from the front-end loader to a plow or a mower in less than five minutes. It's a fantastic tractor."

Howard Younger, Fort Lupton, Colo.: "My 1993 **Ford** pickup has more than 253,000 miles on it, yet everything on it is original including the starter, alternator, and water pump. It still uses less than one quart of oil between changes."

Shawn Cooley, Mount Victory, Ohio: "I bought a 2000 **Chevrolet** K3500 4-WD pickup used with about 8,000 miles on it. It's equipped with a 454 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission. At 11,000 miles a module in the steering column went out and cost me \$900 even though the pickup was still under warranty. At 12,000 miles a bolt in the exhaust manifold broke at a cost of \$550. The company paid for half the expense. At 12,500 miles the starter went out, but this time the warranty had expired and the company wouldn't help."

Gordon Miller, Calumet, Okla.: "Back in 1983 we bought a **Frederick Geo** Source heat pump which is our best buy. **Climate Masters** has purchased the manufacturing rights (ph 405 745-6000; www.climate-master.com). This unit was easy to install and has lowered our heating and cooling bills. It's hooked up to our well. We use the dump water for cattle and to water landscaping plants. We trenched 6 ft. deep from the well to the pump in order to keep the incoming water at a stable temperature. It has required only minor repairs over the years."

"Our 2006 **Deere** 6415 is a good tractor except that it has a flimsy and poorly engineered quick release on the lower 3-pt. lift arms. We can't use a quick hitch on the tractor because our turf equipment requires a pto-driven hydraulic pump. I understand **Deere** has used this 3-pt. design for a long time, but there are easier-to-use systems on the market. Get a clue, **Deere**."

John Toomey, Jr., Canajoharie, N.Y.: "After 800 hours of use my **Case** XL40 skid

steer loader still performs like new."

Blake Otte, Randolph, Minn.: "I get more sleep since we put **Solid Flex** tires from **Case IH** on the **Mustang** skid steer we use in our free stall barns. We use the skid steer daily after each of our three milkings, but we were averaging about a flat per week with pneumatic tires. It seemed like they always came after the midnight milking, and I was the one the crew would call. We were going through 2 1/2 sets of tires a year plus rims when they would get bent up too badly. We were spending \$2,500 a year on flat tires and rims."

"That all ended when we went to **Solid Flex** tires. They are all around tough with no maintenance. We've put about 2,000 hours on them, all on concrete, and they don't show



any wear, plus they have a really good ride. They're expensive, but it didn't take long for them to pay for themselves."

Hazel Hawkins, La Grande, Oregon: "The brakes on our 2005 **Buick** LeSabre have squeaked ever since we bought it. I've complained many times to the dealer with no results. Last November I wrote a letter to **General Motors** by certified mail but got no response, so I wrote again in February and finally they called me. We'll see what they do about it this time."

Tom Williams, Maryland, N.Y.: "Our 1983 **Case** **David Brown** 995 tractor is our best buy. We used it to power a sawmill in winter and to do general farm work in summer. It has several thousand hours on it but still works great. It still has the original muffler."

"Our **New Holland** 315 baler was a problem at first. It had trouble tying about every tenth bale. After we complained the company sent out a couple of men from the factory. They discovered it was ripping the strings off when it hit the kicker. They took a couple of wedges out of the bale chamber, which solved the problem."

Neil Huff, Wawa, Ontario: A 1968 **Deere** 500 industrial loader that he bought used four years ago rates as Neil's "best buy". "This tractor has a lot of hours on it and has been used hard. It smokes and rattles, but it always does what we want it to. We use it to plow snow, to move heavy objects, and to carry scrap cars."

Lowell Siglin, Stark City, Mo.: Lowell's impressed with his 2004 **Volkswagen** Jetta equipped with a turbo diesel injection system. "It has a good ride for a small car, and we can go several hundred miles at a stretch without any discomfort. That's a good thing because it can easily go 500 miles per tankful of gas. That's 40 to 46 mpg overall."

Neil Noble, Shelburne, Ontario: "My best buy is my 2005 **Ford** 500 all-wheel-drive car equipped with **Yokohama** ice tires and a CVT transmission. I use this car to drive 38 miles to work. It works great in snow, has a lot of power, and is easy on fuel."

James Konechne, Kimball, S. Dak.: "James likes his **Silener** hydraulic-operated cattle chute. "I never thought working cattle could be so easy. The **Silener** makes it much easier and safer for both the operator and the cattle. It runs quiet because it has moly-lined joints and is built heavy. My sons will be using this cattle chute long after I retire."

"My **Kawasaki** 3010 4-WD Mule utility vehicle is a best buy. I think every farmer should own one, and I'm not even a dealer. It's one of the most frequently used pieces of equipment on our farm. I use it to check on cattle, to fix fences, or just to go to the field. It lets me leave the pickup parked, which saves money on fuel and maintenance."

E. E. Gruber, Delphi, Ind.: "My 2007 **Stihl** 14-in. chainsaw is my best buy. It starts easy as the starter rope is easy to pull with no jerks."

Jeff Lang, Newport News, Va.: "In my opinion **Stihl** chainsaws rank among the best on the market. Overall, **Stihl** has a good reputation and a reliable product. I own an **MS-310** chainsaw equipped with a 16-in. bar. It can handle up to a 24-in. bar and uses 3/8-in. chain links. I used this saw for more than two years with no problems. Then suddenly one day it wouldn't start. I noticed the boot that goes around the top of the spark plug was loose on the wire. I found a bad connection. After I fixed it my starting problems were solved."

Paul Kleinschmidt, Merrill, Wis.: Paul's impressed with his **Malco Products** Turbo Shear that turns a drill into a power shear, making fast cuts in a variety of materials including steel, fiber cement siding, and backerboard (**Annandale, Minn.** ph 800 328-3530; www.malcoproducts.com). "I needed a shear for a garage siding project, and this simple American-made product did the trick. I used it with my Milwaukee drill. I don't want to risk injury with cheap imported tools so I always buy quality American-made products."

"On the minus side, he's had problems with a **Mighty** brand oil filter. "After I had the oil changed at a lube shop the filter failed. After six miles the engine failed. The owner of the lube shop cut me a check but no more cheap filters for me."

Randy Schroeder, Beatty, Nevada: "I'm impressed with **K&W** permanent head gasket and block repair, which is available at many auto parts stores and even at Amazon.com. Follow the bottle directions closely. This stuff really works."



"It consists of nanoparticles that are one millionth the size of a millimeter that permanently bond to repair surfaces. Repairs cracked engine blocks, cylinder heads, freeze plugs, heater cores and other cooling system leaks. Works on aluminum, cast iron, copper, brass and plastics."

Tony Megens, Tiverton, Ontario: "Here are a couple of good buys I've made during my 50-plus year farming career. Dad sold his 1947 **Farmall** C tractor so I got a 10-year-old 1948 **W-4**, which I still use. It has had new tires, and the valves, bell housing, and bearings and seal were redone. Otherwise it has been a real workhorse."

Gary Friesenborg, Buffalo Center, Iowa: Gary's the proud owner of a 1999 **GMC** Sierra 1/2-ton extended cab pickup equipped with a 5.3-liter, V-8 engine. "I still drive this pickup every day with no problems. I change the oil every 6,000 miles and the transmission oil every 100,000 miles. The shocks were replaced at 150,000 miles. The pickup now has more than 225,000 miles but still runs and drives like new."