

# Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

(Continued from previous page)

**Ford F-250 Supercab 4-WD pickup.** "It has a 460 cu. in. engine and a 4:10 rear end which gives it plenty of power. I really like the extended cab. It has plenty of room for our two small children as well as my wife. The only negatives are that it's not too easy to get into the rear seat, a problem that has been taken care of on the new series models. Also, it could be more fuel efficient. It gets only about 10 mpg. Overall I'm well pleased with it. I'd definitely buy another one, especially the new series. I like them very much."

**Curt Varney, Propestow, Ill.:** "My 1995 Woods 3-pt. finishing mower is my best buy. It makes a 6-ft. cut and does a fine job. I use it to cut large areas around our farmstead and to cut along each side of our lane. It has three blades and caster wheels on all four corners. I use it on my Ford 960 narrow front tricycle-type tractor, which is highly maneuverable."

**Carl Zismer, Maquoketa, Iowa:** "My worst buy is the 1997 Cummins diesel engine in our Gleaner R52 combine. It has 180 hours on it. The problem is that it leaks oil - I scooped several shovels full of greasy dirt out of the engine compartment. The dirt even gets into the combine's cleaning shoe. There's a puddle of oil at the blowby pipe, too. I don't know how this problem will be resolved. It's still under warranty."

**Mel Friesen, Newton, Kan.:** "It does everything I expected it to," says Mel, pleased with his 1994 Grasshopper riding mower equipped with a 48-in. front-mount deck. "The front-mount deck works great for mowing under trees. I really like the hydrostatic controls. I can raise and lower deck with ease at any time."

**Sandra Livesay, Mountain Home, Ark.:** "Our best buy is our 1998 25-hp. Grasshopper mower with a Kubota engine and 61-in. deck. This is the second Grasshopper we have owned and they've both been flawless. When my husband first brought one home, I was skeptical because it looked so strange, with the deck on the front. But after driving it, I'd never cut grass any other way. We have a 6 1/2-acre yard and we normally cut grass from early March till November, so the machines get a workout."

"I had problems with a recent car purchase and I think my experience might help others avoid a problem in the future. What happened is that I bought a 1999 Toyota Camry LE. Our previous 1992 Camry had lumbar seats so I asked the salesman if this one did too. He said yes so we went ahead and bought it. After we got it, we found out it did not have lumbar seats and that they only come on the model with leather seats. We've been talking to the sales manager but all they do is give us the name of a shop where we can pay to have the lumbar added. My suggestion to other car buyers is to not take the word of sales people when making such a substantial purchase. Either check it out yourself, or get it in writing."

**Jim Merriman, Deckerville, Mich.:** "We're pleased with our Deere 425 all-wheel steering riding mower. We have about 3 acres to mow and there are at least 150 trees of various sizes to work around. Before we bought this mower, we spent as much time trimming as we did mowing. Now we do nearly all of it in one pass. I'm amazed at how well this machine maneuvers and how easy it is for new drivers to learn to drive it. Maintenance has been virtually non-existent,

some of which is because we keep the blades sharp and the underside of the deck clean."

**George Schneider, Oakland, Calif.:** "In a recent report, Meredith Ewing said this about his Volkswagen pickup: 'I'll probably never own a pickup as good as this one again.' I'd like to say he can if he wants to do some work."

"There is a pickup that Toyota makes in South Africa that's built to get 300,000 miles. They are Toyota Landcruiser pickups and all you have to do is figure out how to get one into the U.S. I've talked to Toyota representatives about it and they won't talk about it. They say they already sell everything they can make as fast as they can make it. I recently talked to a dealer in Zimbabwe and he said, 'If you figure out how to get it into the U.S., I'll get you one.'

"The 4-WD Landcruiser pickup has a solid front axle, a standard cab, a full-size long bed, and a 4.6 liter 6-cyl. Diesel engine. Gas



engines are also available. The body and bed are made of sheet metal four times heavier than any U.S.-built trucks.

"Best of all, the truck sells for \$25,250 U.S. for the loaded version."

"If anyone figures out how to get these out of Africa, please let me know."

**Alan Maclean, Kingston, Ontario:** "Our best buys are both General Electric products. We have a vertical fire GE LA20 oil furnace that's been in service since 1947. That's 52 winters. We also have a GE 180 amp AC welder that we bought in 1952. It's still in use nearly every day."

**Paul & Calvin Dentz, Iroquois, Ont.:** "Our Massey Ferguson 285 tractor, bought in 1983, has been split so many times I think it should have been built with a quick-disconnect system at the transmission. It's about as dependable as a scud missile and only slightly less costly. Major repairs have included replacing the rear planetaries, the pto clutch and splines, one front and two rear transmission bearings, and the 3-pt. internal lift cylinder. We also rebuilt the fuel injection pump and fixed the pto brake four times. That's about \$13,000 worth of repairs on a \$24,500 tractor along with endless downtime. All we've ever gotten from Agco is a 'You bought it, it's your problem' attitude."

**George A. Wojnar, Cream Ridge, N.J.:** "One of my best buys is my Ford 8N tractor. It runs as good as new and looks like new, too. This 8N could easily work day after day, but it doesn't have to. Just owning it brings back memories of old machinery, old ways of doing things, and people that were good to me when I was growing up. I feel lucky to own this 8N."

**Jared W. Jamison, Quinter, Kan.:** "I like my 1998 DR trimmer/mower equipped with a 5 1/2 hp Kawasaki engine. We use it to mow around buildings, calf hutches, etc., where there might be junk steel or large rocks that could damage conventional mower blades. It does a good job of cutting 2 to 3-ft. high weeds and grass."

"We've had a lot of trouble with our 1990 Polaris 350 4-wheeler ATV. It fouls out spark

plugs quite often. It's powered by a 2-cycle liquid-cooled engine and is chain-driven. We don't like that combination. There are much better 4-wheelers on the market."

**Doug Garvin, Fairview, Pa.:** Doug nominates the book "Design of Weldments" as his "best buy" (The Lincoln Electric Co., 22801 St. Clair Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44117 fax 216 361-5901). It sells for \$10. "Anyone who welds should have a copy. The subjects covered and the presentation of the material is unique. You don't have to be an engineer to learn from this book. It's better than any other welding textbook I've seen."

**Dwayne King, Hanley, Sask.:** Dwayne's disappointed with his Bourgault 2115 air seeder cart. "I purchased this machine new and have never been able to seed canola with it. It's impossible to calibrate the planting rate on it. It jumps from 6 lbs. to 12 lbs. to 2 lbs., etc. I've made several calls to the dealer and the manufacturer with no response. The manufacturer says they can't update every machine out there."

**David Martin, Hamlin, N.Y.:** "My 1998 Sunflower 5-shank subsoiler does a good job loosening hardpan at a 15 to 16-in. depth on our clay loam soil. It works best when the ground is dry for maximum shattering effect. We use a Deere 8870 tractor to pull it."

**Andy Mroczek, Honeoye Falls, N.Y.:** "Our Case-IH double drill hitch lets us pull two 10-ft. grain drills at once. When we were looking to upgrade our grain planting equipment, our neighbor mentioned how ridiculous it is to use a 80 to 100 hp tractor to pull just one grain drill. The hitch lets us cover 20 ft. in each pass so the acres go by a lot faster. By simply flipping a hydraulic lever we can fold the drills in place behind the tractor for transport, one behind the other, so they're no wider than one drill."

"We really like the Unverferth residue cleaners that we mounted on our Deere corn planter. They not only clean in front of the row units for more accurate seed placement, but they also push rocks away from the gauge wheels. They've saved us many hours of labor by preventing damage to the wheels. Also, the seed boxes no longer seem to jump

**"They've saved us many hours of labor by preventing damage to the gauge wheels."**

up and down as much which means the seed is being placed at the proper depth."

"Our Farm Aid feed mixer is a best buy (Corsica, S. Dak.). We've used it for six years to feed total mixed rations twice a day to our 115 cows with almost no down time. The only parts we've had to replace were the feed-out chain and a couple of bearings on the feed-out conveyor. The mixer is made with simple and common parts."

On the negative side, "We had to install new packer rollers on our Kewanee culti-mulcher after the old ones wore out. The manufacturer was bought out by Bush Hog, which would not help us when we had a problem with the new rollers. The rollers have notches that are designed to mesh and lock the wheels together so that they all turn at once. The problem is that when the rollers were cast, the notches were made thinner which allows them to climb over each other.

That causes the rollers to wobble and push off the snap-ring that holds the stack on the shaft."

"Our dealer couldn't get the Bush Hog rep to take a look at our problem. The next purchase we make, we'll be sure to find out if anything on it comes from a Bush Hog company and, if it does, we'll have to rethink our options."

**Stephan Janos, Somerville, Ohio:** Stephan likes low pressure Turbo Drop XL venturi nozzles made by Greenleaf Technologies. He used them last year for the first time. "I bought them because they're supposed to reduce spray drift. I was very happy with them. I had to spray on some windy days, but the spray didn't drift. Weed control was good, but not great because it was very dry here last year. I think these nozzles will pay for themselves in a very short time."

"I bought a gas-powered Weed Eater leaf blower to keep my combine clean and blow trash off the radiator. It works great - in fact I wish I'd bought it years ago. A lot of my ground is a long way from an air compressor, but I don't need one to operate this unit. I also use it to blow trash off the radiator. It's priced under \$125. My only wish is that it weighed less."

**Raymond Swenson, Brooks, Minn.:** Raymond's impressed with his 1997 Volkswagen Passat car equipped with a diesel engine. "It handles excellent, accelerates well, has fantastic fuel efficiency, and runs quiet considering it has a diesel engine. We also own a 1981 diesel-powered Volkswagen which has more than 420,000 miles on it but still runs good. It still has the original rod, main bearings and pistons. New rings were put in it once."

**Joe D. Hostetler, Fredericksburg, Ohio:** "We're well pleased with our two Chevrolet 3/4-ton 4-WD pickups, which are both equipped with 6.2-liter diesel engines. One's a 1982 model and the other a 1992 model. They're dependable and durable work trucks, yet they handle and ride well on the open road. The 1982 model has 210,000 miles on it and the 1992 model about 136,000 miles. We've always used Amsoil synthetic oil in these trucks which we think provides extra protection."

**Chris Lynch, Sabina, Ohio:** "My Deere 9100 4-WD tractor has worked perfect for 1 1/2 years. I'm impressed with its power and torque. It replaced an old Steiger. The Deere model uses only half as much fuel and is much more comfortable to drive."

**O. Douglas Holland, Bedford, Va.:** "I like my 1972 Massey Ferguson 1130 D tractor equipped with a multi power transmission. No problems after all these years. It's easy on fuel, steers easy, and has a lot of hydraulic capacity."

"My worst buy is my 1979 Massey Ferguson 2745 tractor equipped with a V-8 diesel engine and 24-speed transmission. I had to replace the fuel injection pump and injectors and lines, as well as the clutch and pto bearing. The transmission had to be repaired twice. The tractor is hard to steer whenever I drive slow or back up to hook up to equipment. If I shift from low to high range on-the-go, the transmission locks in neutral. It's a big problem to fix."

**Jack L. Rarig, Catawissa, Pa.:** Jack's "worst buys" are his two 1995 Deere 5400 tractors. "The first one was returned to the factory for evaluation of the transmission only three weeks after I got it and with only