

## 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  
www.FARMSHOW.com.**

**Ron W. Felce, Forest Grove, B.C.:** Ron’s still driving his 1974 **Ford F-250 4-WD** pickup which has a whopping 675,000 miles on it. “It was originally a heavy duty 3/4-ton. In 1982 it was damaged in an accident so we converted it to a 1-ton model and equipped it with an 8-ft. flat deck, 1-ton rear end, and dual wheels. We also replaced the original 360 cu. in. engine with a 428 cu. in. high performance engine which has been rebuilt twice over the years. The pickup had some rust so we replaced the hood and doors and put fiberglass floorboards in the cab. It still looks great. We use it to haul cows, firewood, and hay - sometimes all three in the same day. With its heavy-duty running gear it can pull almost anything, including 8-ton hay wagons. I wish the company would build trucks like this again.”

**Troy Gill, Caroline, Alberta:** “My 1996 **Dodge 1/2-ton 4-WD** pickup is my best buy. It’s reliable and has a large cab and a comfortable ride.”

**Jolin Den Hartogh, Amherstburg, Ontario:** “I’m well pleased with my 1987 **Massey Ferguson 3505** tractor. It has about 1,500 hours on it with no problems at all.”

**Reno Bertoia, Baldwin, Sask.:** Reno owns a 1989 **Ford F-250 4-WD** pickup equipped with a 460 cu. in. engine. “It has more than 180,000 miles on it but still runs

der Honda motors and they work great, but this twin cylinder model is a piece of junk. It’s difficult to start in cold weather, runs poor in humid, cold weather, and stalls repeatedly once the temperature falls below -15 F. I installed a new ‘winter front’ primer pump and a low temperature carburetor, but they haven’t helped much. The company replaced the motor but the new one doesn’t work any better. It would make a good boat anchor.”

**Greg Butler, Croton, Ontario:** “It’s equipped with a Vortec 305 cu. in. engine that has a lot of power and is easy on fuel,” says Greg about his 1997 **GM** extended cab 1/2-ton 2-WD pickup. “It has needed only regular maintenance. The cab is nicely laid out. The back seat can be a little tight for bigger people but is still handy. If this pickup keeps on performing like it has, my next pickup will definitely be another GM.”

On the negative side, “The pickup came factory-equipped with **Goodyear** Tiger Paw Uniroyal tires which were awful. I hated them from the start and replaced them at 20,000 miles. They had no ‘bite’ at all and would squeal whenever I turned, even if I turned slowly.”

**Ray Meardi, Hylo, Alberta:** “I like my **Honda** 3-in. and 2-in. water pumps. Even after they sit idle over the winter, I can start them right up again with just a couple of pulls.

“I’m also pleased with my 1997 portable bandsaw sawmill made by **Montana Sawmill Mfg.** It’s simple, relatively inexpensive, and does the job of bandsaw mills that cost twice as much. I paid \$5,000 for it.”

**Ron Ratzlaff, Avon, S. Dak.:** “My **New Holland 640** ‘silage special’ baler makes nice, tight round bales every time and has been maintenance-free.

“My **New Holland LX885** skid steer loader has about 1,200 hours on it and is a best buy. The only problem was a fuel injector that went bad. However, the repair work was covered by warranty. In my opinion it’s the best skid steer out there.”

“A 1996 **Polaris Sportsman 500** is my worst buy. The repair bills on it never seem to end. Repair work has included a camshaft, U-joint, two drive belts, and both clutch pulleys. Also, it wouldn’t shift into range easily. No dealer wants it as a trade-in so it’s costing us about 90 cents a mile to own.”

**W.C. Waltz, Jr., Chinchilla, Pa.:** He says a 1988 **Ford F-350** pickup with a 7.3-liter diesel engine was his “worst buy” ever. “The company spent more than \$50,000 doing warranty work on this pickup but still they wouldn’t take it back. Instead they just keep fixing it over and over and over. Luckily I had an extended warranty policy so all the repair work was covered except for a \$25 deductible.”

**Gary Ronan, Lindstrom, Minn.:** Gary’s impressed with his **DR** brush mower (Country Home Products, Vergennes, Vt.). “I have several acres of brush, sumac, and buckthorn and I had tried every way I could think of to get rid of them without success. Hand-held brush cutters were just too slow and sickle bar mowers couldn’t deal with the sumac, some of which is over 1 in. dia. But the DR mower cuts down almost everything I point it at. I use the company’s stock blade on it. They offer a 5-lb. blade but I haven’t had to use it. I bought what the company now calls their ‘Classic’ model. However, next time I’d get their gear drive model because it has a reverse gear which would be nice to have from time to time.

“My 1997 **Century Mig 140** welder is a best buy. It’s a 110-volt model which works great as a spot welder. One negative is that

good. I had to change the wheel hubs a year ago and also a ring gear and starter, but I still think it’s a good pickup. Consumer Reports magazine said this model was a lemon, but I don’t know where they get their information.”

**Steve Floyd, Eustace, Texas:** “I like my 1985 **Stihl 028 AV** chain saw. It has had only one spark plug in 14 years but still never fails to start. It’s the best chain saw I’ve ever owned.”

On the minus side, he lists his 1993 **Deere 111** riding mower. “It wouldn’t mow evenly and the Briggs & Stratton gas engine kept breaking down. It spent more time in the shop than it did on my lawn. After using it for two years I finally traded it in for an **IH Cub Cadet** which I really like.”

**Richard Neal, Caldwell, Texas:** Richard’s happy with his 1999 **Ford F-250** heavy-duty extended cab pickup equipped with a turbo-charged diesel engine. “It has more pulling power than any pickup in its class and is one of the quietest diesel pickups on the road. I really like the two extra rear doors which are standard equipment.”

**Klydon Farms, Brandon, Manitoba:** “My 1998 **Kodiak** push-type floor sweeper makes it almost fun to clean the cement floors in my shop and Quonset building. It’s quite expensive so I resisted buying it for a long time, but I finally broke down and spent the money. Now I’m glad I did.

“The 1998 20 hp **Honda** twin cylinder motor that I use to operate my grain auger is my worst buy ever. I own other single cylin-