

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.

Doug Dieker, Westphalia, Kan.: “You certainly don’t expect this kind of trouble with a month-old machine,” says Doug, who, along with his father Tom, watched helplessly as the **Case-IH 2388** combine they bought new last September burned up in the field a month later with only 100 hours on it.

It happened while Doug was combining soybeans, with about 100 ft. to go to the end of the field. The first indication of trouble came when the parking brake light came on and the warning horn sounded. By the time Doug got to the end of the row, Tom, who was driving truck, could see flames underneath the combine in the transmission area where burning hydrostatic oil was leaking out. The Diekers had a small fire extinguisher in Tom’s truck, but the fire was too far along to use it. The front end of the combine was completely destroyed and the insurance company totaled the machine, estimating more than \$100,000 in damages.

“Case told us, ‘That’s what you have insurance for,’” says Doug. “Other than sending some Case reps out to look at it, the company offered no help. Our insurance company settled with us and intends to subrogate Case to share in the loss, as I understand it.

“The fire appears not to have started in the rotor cage area, but rather near the transmission, possibly by an electrical short in a sole-

ally located the part at a Cummins dealer in Sioux Falls. We bought plenty of return lines so we’d always have a spare to replace the next one that broke. Next, the wiring harness developed a short, which, in turn, caused problems throughout the entire electrical system. For example, the windshield wipers wouldn’t shut off unless you pulled the fuse. Also, the defrosters wouldn’t work because the air conditioning didn’t work, thanks to the short in the wiring. Non-functioning defrosters pose a real safety hazard. I took the pickup to three different dealers but no one could fix it. I didn’t get any satisfaction from my area rep, either. Finally, in August, I traded it for a Ford F-350 which I’m happy with so far. Incidentally, the day I drove the pickup in to trade, the engine wouldn’t shut off. I understand it took the dealer a couple of weeks to find out what caused that problem.”

John Suhar, Kinsman, Ohio: One of John’s “worst buys” is the “**Drill Doctor**” drill sharpener he bought from Dakota Sales. “It will not sharpen drill bits at the proper angle,” he says. “I called the company and they gave me all kinds of pointers on how to use the sharpener the ‘right way.’ I took their advice but it still doesn’t work properly.”

Sherman Allen, Conneaut Lake, Pa.: Sherman has had big-time problems with **Onduline** corrugated roofing since installing it on two farm buildings in the late 1970’s and early 80’s. He is now part of a class action lawsuit, along with thousands of other claimants, which has been filed against the manufacturer.

“It was sold as a lifetime alternative to tin and shingle roofing. We put it on a bale storage building and also on a machine shed. It was supposed to last forever with no maintenance but it didn’t take long for it to start falling apart. We complained to the company and they offered to pay us for paint that we could use to repaint the roof, which I thought was a joke. This product was way oversold. A big waste of money.”

Editor’s Note: Edward Hadley, an attorney for the Gideon & Wiseman law firm in Nashville, Tenn., says about 6,000 people have joined the class action lawsuit against Onduline. “Testimony obtained to date establishes that the manufacturer of the product knew that it would not perform as promised in the promotional literature, would not self-seal when nailed to a structure, would not retain its painted surface, and would ultimately sag, leak, and fail irrespective of application or installation,” he notes.

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John Hartnett, Jr., Richmond, Mo.: “My best buys of all time are my 1956 **Allis-Chalmers** WD45 and 1962 **Ford** 901 tractors. The Ford model is equipped with a diesel engine. I bought both tractors used and they’ve been very reliable.

“My 1995 **Ford** F-250 pickup equipped with a Power Stroke diesel engine is a best buy.

“My **Deere** 332 lawn tractor equipped with a 50-in. mower has about 600 hours on it and is also a best buy.”

Neal Howard, Woodstock, Ontario: Neal’s disappointed with his 1995 **JF** 320 tedder rake. “It works good for tedding but not for raking, because it misses a lot of hay and also throws blobs of it all over the place. The wheels on back that are supposed to let you adjust windrow width don’t even turn. Another problem is that the teeth are always digging in the ground and breaking off, along

noid or in some wiring, our insurance company’s investigators believe. We believe the problem relates to too large openings in the screening that allows the fan to suck bean dust, leaves and trash right into the transmission area and on into the grain tank. I suppose you could clean the trash out once a day or so, but you just don’t think of doing so on a brand new machine.

“We were two-thirds finished with harvest when the fire occurred and we had to rent a **Deere** 9500 from a dealer and another 2388 from a neighbor to wrap up the remaining 700 acres. That cost us \$100 per hour apiece out of our own pocket.

“The combine is currently sitting at our local Case dealer where it’ll be sold for parts or for rebuilding. We’ve run Case combines since 1990 after switching from **Deere**. We’ve considered another Case to replace the 2388, but we may go back to **Deere** after this experience.”

Lyle Oye, Pipestone, Minn.: A troublesome 1998 **Dodge** pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter Cummins diesel and 5-speed transmission is Lyle’s “worst buy.”

“We depend on our pickups to haul up to 7,000-lb. loads of pigs,” he says. “I bought the pickup new last February because I figured it would be as reliable as all the other **Dodge** pickups I’ve owned. But I started having problems in less than a month. For starters, the all-metal fuel return line broke nearly every other day and no parts were available anywhere in the U.S., I was told. We eventu-