

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

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Marvin Bindig, Good Thunder, Minn.: Marvin's had trouble with the brakes on his 1991 Ford Tempo and has been frustrated in his efforts to solve the problem. “One day my wife was driving the car and one of the rear wheels locked up in traffic. Luckily she was going only about 20 mph. She tried backing up and the wheel came free. Luckily she was able to make it home okay. We had the 50,000 mile extended warranty and this happened at 56,000 miles. I removed the brake drum from the wheel and found that the automatic adjuster had fallen out and got caught in the drum, locking the wheel and crushing the end of the emergency cable. The problem was that the adjuster had never expanded as the brake lining wore down, allowing the adjuster to fall out and get caught in the drum. I removed the other rear wheel and drum and found that it had never expanded, either, which kept it from engaging. It appears that the adjuster wasn't properly installed and couldn't self adjust - the large end of a notched piece is pushed directly against the emergency arm instead of being beside it.

“Apparently, frequent adjustment of the emergency brake by the dealer had compensated for the non functioning adjuster before the wheel locked up, thus keeping the brake pedal travel near normal. I expected my

began to have flats. The problem was that the sidewalls were wearing holes in the tubes. After spending more than \$300 on tire repairs during a 4-month period, we removed the tubes and fluid and mounted the tires without tubes. This worked for about 30 hours, but then the tires began leaking air out the sidewalls. My tire man says he has seen this problem with Armstrong tires before. After spending more than \$450 on service calls I replaced the tires with another brand. If I ever buy another tractor it won't have Armstrong tires on it.

“My Donahue 16-ft. tandem grain trailer is my best buy. It's built with quality and has replaced two old farm trucks for hauling our grain to market. We use our 1994 Ford F-350 pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter diesel engine to pull the trailer. It can easily pull the trailer when it's loaded with 300 bu. of wheat. The pickup is also a best buy.”

Wade Wolfe, Centre Hall, Pa.: “I really like my Case-IH 7210 front wheel assist tractor. I especially like the cab and power shift transmission.”

On the “worst buy” side, he lists the 1998 Green Star population monitor that he uses on his Deere 1780 corn planter. “I spent the extra money to upgrade to a Green Star display and ended up with nothing more than a population monitor. It's unbelievable how far Green Star is behind Ag Leader in technology.”

Charles Snapp, Cynthiana, Ky.: Charles is impressed with his M & W 4590 round baler. “I've used it to make almost 5,000 bales and have wrapped about three fourths of them with plastic. It makes quality bales. Given a choice, my cows will eat the round bales made by this baler before they'll eat square ones. Also, their body condition has improved since I've been feeding them the wrapped hay.”

Joseph Rayna, Stewartville, N.J.: “My best buy is my 1997 Sears Craftsman Industrial 13.2-volt, 3/8-in. cordless drill/driver. I actually got it as a Christmas present from my wife. It's one of the most useful and handiest tools in my shop. It has a lot of power and is cordless so I don't have to drag an extension cord around.”

Dean Veitch, Prince George, British Columbia: “I've got more than 80,000 miles on my 1990 Toyota extended cab pickup and the only problem I've had was last spring when the engine began to miss. The dealer diagnosed the problem as a leaking head gasket and repaired it without charge. No other problems at all.”

Ervin Clark, Oroville, Calif.: “I'm well pleased with my 1993 Henke 650 tub grinder. It's trouble-free and does a good job of chopping hay for my cattle. It can handle 25 to 30 bales per hour.”

Lee Horst, Gettysburg, Pa.: “My Deere 9400 combine has performed even better than I expected. It does a super job of threshing and is easy to service and maintain. I can run it 10 hours a day without getting tired.”

Raymond C. Steinhour, Greenview, Ill.: “My Honda 350 4-wheeler ATV has a lot of power and is easy to start in any kind of weather.

“My 1998 Stihl string trimmer and 1998 Stihl chain saw are both best buys. They have a lot of power and start easy.”

David Holte, Wendell, Minn.: David likes his 1995 Chevrolet K2500 extended cab pickup equipped with a short bed. “I've put more than 43,000 miles on it with no problems and get 15 to 16 mpg driving to work. It has a lot of towing capacity. I recently traded it for a 1998 Chevrolet K2500. I hope

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

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dealer to supply free parts so that I could repair the brakes myself. However, he said they were no longer obligated to supply free parts since the failure occurred after the warranty had expired.

“I asked the dealer to come out and look at the problem, but he said he wouldn't waste his time as he had no way of knowing if someone had tampered with the brakes. Yet I bought the car new from him and he had always serviced it. In checking with various brake shops I find this problem isn't an isolated case. If this brake had locked up a few days earlier when we were going 55 mph on a four-lane freeway, it could have caused the car to possibly skid around and result in an accident.

“I think this is a serious problem that could affect thousands of people.”

Ron Miller, Geneseo, Ill.: Ron likes his “Bean Hustler” bulk seed handling system (General Machine Co., Yates City, Ill. ph 309 358-1544). “I used it for the first time this year and it lived up to all the manufacturer's claims. I'm well satisfied with it. The design makes it easy to switch from one seed wagon to another and it can also be used to remove seed from a planter or drill. Saying goodbye to bagged soybean seed was not at all hard to do.”

Roy Carson, Valley View, Texas: Roy, who bought a new tractor equipped with 42-in. Armstrong radial tires on back, says they're his “worst buy”. “After 2 1/2 years and with less than 1,000 hours on the tires I