

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

and breaks. I've had it fixed three times. It should be made of metal."

Richard A. Marble, Farmington, Maine: Richard nominates his 2005 **New Holland TN 60-A 2-WD** tractor as his "best buy". "We use this tractor on our 136-acre farm for haying and for general farm work. We also use it to harvest wood for firewood and building materials. I'm pleased with how much power it has. So far it has been trouble-free."

Charles E. Hogue, Monroe, Oregon: "I like my 2005 **Yardman 420** 21-in. push mower equipped with a Honda 5 1/2 hp engine. It always starts on the first pull.

"My 2004 **Murray** garden tractor equipped with a Briggs & Stratton 21 hp engine starts every time. No problems."

On the negative side, "My 2003 **Husqvarna** riding mower equipped with a 18 hp Kawasaki engine was fouling spark plugs every 25 hours. I took it in to my dealer who was just replaced the plugs, but kept the mower for up to three months at a time. The problem was that gas was leaking into the engine oil, but neither the company nor the dealer would stand behind it. I finally got it repaired at another shop at my own expense."

"The problem was gas leaking into the engine."

Paul Martin, Nashville, Tenn.: "I like **Stihl** power equipment. I have two chainsaws, a weed eater, blower, pole pruner, and hedge trimmer. All of these products are built strong and are well engineered."

Bryan Martin, Pine Grove, Penn.: A 2006 **PJ 24-ft.** gooseneck trailer rates as Bryan's "best buy" (ph 800 452-9116; www.pj-trailers.com). "I use this trailer almost every day during the summer to haul vegetables to local produce auctions. It has been a dependable trailer and is just what I needed."

Fred Iozzo, Wayne, Ill.: Fred's impressed with his **Bobcat T200** skid loader which he bought used. "I can't believe how great this machine is. Over the years I've owned three Bobcats and all of them ran good, but this one is incredible.

"My **Ryobi** metal-cutting saw is my worst buy. It lasted only about one hour before it quit working. No parts are available and no one would even try to fix it."

Arnold Hellmann, Worden, Ill.: Arnold likes his **Easy-Set Mole Eliminator** trap (Nuisance Wildlife Control Products, ph 888 778-7988; www.easymoletrap.com). The company says it's the only mole trapping



device that can be set into the mole tunnel without any digging, setting dangerous cables, spears or clamps. "I set the trap twice and got two dead moles. My brother caught five or six moles with his trap right off the bat."

Ray Hoem, Buhl, Idaho: "I'm pleased with our **Udderly EZ** hand-pumped milking machine (EZ Animal Products, ph 866 507-7773; www.UdderlyEZ.com). It makes it



easier and safer to milk out colostrums for newborn foals. It can also be used to milk sheep, goats and other animals. "We purchased it to help with our flock of 165 sheep. It's a wonderful tool and helps considerably in our flock management," says Ray.

David L. Smith, Amarillo, Texas: A 1997 **Jeep Cherokee 4-WD** wagon equipped with an in-line 4.0-liter, 6-cyl. engine and automatic transmission rates as David's "best buy". "My wife bought this vehicle new in 1998 and has had no trouble at all with it. It has more than 145,000 miles on it. I've replaced two sets of brakes and six sets of tires as well as a battery. Otherwise it has required only routine maintenance. My wife has talked about replacing it for two years, but she hasn't found anything else that has caught her eye."

James Valiquette, Escanaba, Mich.: "My 1960's **Oliver 1600** tractor equipped with a 6-cyl. gas engine, which I bought used, is my best buy. This tractor was a one-owner model and I bought it for only \$4,000. I use it on my small 80-acre farm. It starts on the first couple of turns no matter what the weather conditions. I use it with my 8-ft. snowblower and to go out in the woods to cut firewood. It's a great tractor."

Harry Dawson, Rome, Ga.: A used 1993 **Subaru Sambar** mini truck that he bought a year ago rates as Harry's "best buy". "This mini truck has performed flawlessly. It's equipped with a 5-speed transmission and



push button 4-WD with an extra 'double low' 4-WD gear. It has an AM radio, air conditioner, and a good heater. It had about 75,000 miles on it when I bought it.

"It's the handiest machine on my farm. I can't understand why someone would pay \$8,000 or more for a 4-WD Gator or a Kawasaki Mule and freeze during the winter, when they can get a Subaru Sambar with more carrying capacity and for less than half as much money. One additional benefit is that in my state I can get a license tag for it and drive it on the road at 40 to 50 mpg. It works great for running errands."

Travis Butler, Clinton, N.C.: "My best buy is my **Massey Ferguson 175** tractor. It has never failed me and is inexpensive to operate. No job is too big or too small for this tractor.

"My 1992 **Toyota** pickup is a best buy. I'm a Ford man, but I have to give Toyota credit because this pickup has almost 300,000 miles on it with few problems."

Clyde J. Cole, Hurdland, Mo.: "I like my **Little Giant** ladder, but the company never sent the hinge that converts it to a scaffold. I contacted the company more than a year ago about this matter but they never replied.

"My **Cub Cadet** zero turn riding mower equipped with a 44-in. deck is my worst buy. The springs kept breaking, and the deck keeps plugging up. The deck somehow wasn't de-

signed right and plugs up in tall or wet grass.

"Another worst buy was a 110-volt wire welder that I bought from **Harbor Freight**."

Kelly Palmer, Angola, Ind.: Kelly likes his 2005 **Suzuki King Quad** ATV. "I've used it with a 5-ft. blade to push snow so high that people think I used a Bobcat skid loader. I also used it to level 80 tons of sand inside my greenhouses and to pull out trees that would cause problems for my full-size 4-WD truck. I pull two 4-ft. mowers behind it to cut six acres of grass each week. It's so easy to use that my wife and kids ride it all the time. It's the best money I ever spent."

William Fischer, Fremont, Wis.: "I'm happy with my **Husqvarna 16-in.** chainsaw. This saw always starts good and cuts faster than any other brand I've owned."

Larry Danler, Pinedale, Arizona: "It's a great little truck," says Larry about his 1985 **Toyota 4-WD** pickup. "I bought it used three years ago with about 125,000 miles on it. The previous owner bought it new and never did any engine work on it. I replaced the timing chain at about 150,000 miles but otherwise the engine has run like new. Everything on it, including all the lights inside and out, still work perfectly."

Victor R. Greene, Plattsburg, Mo.: Victor bought his 1985 **International Harvester 1055** tractor used and is pleased with it, except for the way the battery system is set up. "When I bought this tractor it had two new 12-volt batteries in parallel hookup. The batteries were 'fighting' each other and wearing each other down, so that when I tried to start the tractor there was almost no power. To solve the problem, I replaced the two 12-volt batteries with two new 6-volt batteries which I hooked up in series. I cut the battery cable in half and installed new leads to make sure the negative-positive connection was correct. The new 6-volt battery system has the same total cranking amperage as the original 12-volt one. The batteries work fine now and there's plenty of starting power."

Gardner Gray, Pringle, S. Dak.: Gardner is hard put to find enough adjectives to describe his enthusiasm for his **Johnson HyGrade Grader** (Johnson Mfg., Kulm, Ind.



ph 800 874-5600). What makes the Johnson blade different is that it can be hydraulically tilted both left and right and also can be angled both left and right, with all controls operated from the tractor seat. Also, the wheels are located behind the blade, not in front.

Gardner had a contract to build three miles of road for the county and the 12-ft. Johnson pull-type grader made it possible for him to do the job in a very short period of time. "I built three miles of road in rough terrain and relied on a bulldozer for only a small section of the road that was heavy rock," says Gardner. "Other than that, I completed the entire job in only about 140 hours and saved about \$65,000 in professional construction fees. I figure this grader has paid for itself eight times over. The blade is still in excellent condition."

The blades come in 12, 14, and 16-ft. models. The company says they're used to clean and maintain waterways, build ponds, dig irrigation ditches, fill in washouts, level building sites, clean feedlots, remove snow, and level field edges.

Jack Racz, Wrentham, Alberta: "I've operated track hoes for years but I'm really

impressed with my **Can Dig** mini excavator (ph 800 509-5656 or 250 314-0708; www.candig.com). It works great for digging basements and many other jobs," says Jack.



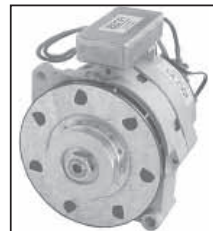
The Candig CD11 can be towed by a small car or ATV or even pushed by hand. It weighs only 840 lbs. so it causes little damage to lawns, says the company. Power is supplied by a 5 1/2 hp Honda engine. It comes with mechanical stabilizer, 2-in. trailer hitch, safety tow chain, and retractable tongue wheel. An auger, wood splitter, hydraulic stabilizers, and other accessories are available. A ripper/root cutter accessory allows you to dig through frozen or tough ground, and also doubles as a root cutter. Three different trenching buckets are available.

According to the company, the mini excavator is much safer to use on uneven ground compared to a tracked excavator since they have a low center of gravity and a wide working stance. Access wheels allow the mini excavator to slip through a 28-in. wide yard gate or doorway. The thumb allows you to pick up boulders or logs weighing well over 1,000 lbs., and place them where you wish. A 9 hp model is also available.

John H. Bayes, LaBelle, Fla.: "My **McCullough Eager Beaver** chainsaw is my worst buy. I hadn't used it 20 minutes before the spark coil went out. The price for a new coil - if I could find one - was half the price of the entire saw. This saw doesn't work well for right handed people because the fuel inlet is located on the lower left side of the tank and soon runs out of fuel when sawing horizontally. I eventually drilled extra holes in the saw's housing to facilitate coil cooling."

Israel Whited, West Point, Ind.: "I bought my 1992 **Oldsmobile 88** car used with a lot of miles on it, but it still runs good. It has the 3800 rotor in it. I wish GM put these in all their cars."

Wayne Hopkins, Spartansburg, Penn.: "I've made a lot of furniture with my **Ryobi Planer** but it still works great and is my best buy. It's easy to replace the knives after sharpening them. It's also easy to adjust."



Roman Stoll, Odon, Ind.: "My **Zena** mobile welding system is my best buy (ph 615 897-2011; www.zena.net). It's a high frequency DC welder that attaches to any engine, converting it into a powerful mobile welder that you can take anywhere. Any electric start engine will power it.

"No problems. I like how it welds - all the controls are at my fingertips. It has a boost button to start a tough weld. There's no power at the rod end until I push the weld button. Best of all, it's a lot less expensive than other models," says Roman.

Alvin H. Bornbach, Stratford, Wis.: "My 2006 **Deere 2305** loader tractor equipped with a 3-cyl., 24 hp diesel engine and 62-in. (Continued on next page)