

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

grapes, since the big home improvement stores sell the products. Well, he was right. Salt-laden snow melting from the undersides of our vehicles blistered the paint. We used the same paint on a cellar floor, and it worked out no better. It was painted just before the holidays, and by March there were bare streaks on the floor anywhere there was foot traffic or furniture movement."

Tom Kearns, Redmond, Wash.: Tom nominates his 1997 **Massey Ferguson 1250** tractor as his "worst buy". "With less than 1,000 hours on the tractor, the entire wiring harness had to be replaced because the wires kept breaking. The electrical system on this tractor is a mess - I used the tractor for another 300 hours and had to replace the alternator twice. Now the wiring harness has failed again. The dealer can't help and said that since I live in a rainy climate I can expect the wires to corrode, which I think is nonsense. This tractor has always broken down and is almost like having a toy. It's very undependable."

Don Zeller, Bode, Iowa: "I like the tile plow I bought from Don Wurdinger at **Farm Drainage Plows, Inc.** (Waverly, Iowa ph 319 352-3911). "It's a 3-pt. mounted model which I use to install 4-in. plastic tile. I use it for short runs as well as long runs. My ground has a gradual slope and this machine works nice on it. I bought this tile plow because commercial tile contractors don't want to bother putting in small tile. I space the 4-in. tile closer together than you would with larger tile and use a 150 hp tractor to pre-rip the ground."

Steve Floyd, Eustace, Texas: "I really like this tractor's shuttle transmission - it makes loader work a lot easier," says Steve, impressed with his 2004 **Cub Cadet 8454 45 hp** tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "The loader has a quick-change bucket on it, which I really like because I switch from the bucket to a bale fork quite often. The bucket is 72 in. wide - the same width as the tractor's rear wheels."

J.J. Walker, Phil Campbell, Ala.: J.J.'s impressed with his **Kubota MX5000 4-WD** tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "I use this tractor to operate my Timberking sawmill. It has forks and implements that detach and attach easily using a quick disconnect coupler on the loader."

Harlan Burkholder, Charles City, Iowa: "My **Zartman** cow mattresses are my worst buys. The dealer told me these mattresses would last eight years with no problems. Yet I was able to use them only one month before holes started developing. Now after 15 months about 30 percent of the mattresses have holes in them."

Henrik Hendrickson, Frost, Minn.: Henrik likes the 2003 **Remington** electric chain saw he uses on an 8-ft. extension pole. "This saw cuts fast and can easily saw through 6 to 8-in. dia. tree limbs from the ground. It's easy to use and reasonably priced."

Myron Patrick, Winder, Ga.: A 1978 **Satoh AD 370 4-WD** tractor equipped with a 15 hp, 2-cyl. diesel engine rates as Myron's "best buy". "This tractor has been trouble-free. It still runs like new and has required only routine maintenance. I use it almost every week. It's a great little tractor."

Ron Stoen, Lowry, Minn.: "I leased a **Deere 7800** tractor for one year and then bought it the next year. The third year I sold it to my son, and that's when the problems started. The tractor required several overhauls and had transmission problems and more. I guess this tractor was just a lemon that some other poor soul will end up with now, as my son traded it off. I've been a Deere man since the days of the old G model. I used to think

Deere made the best tractors, but now I'm not so sure."

Tim Estling: A 1988 **Plymouth Voyager** van rates as Tim's "best buy". "I bought this vehicle in 1989 from my brother-in-law. Now it has about 233,000 miles on it and has required only routine maintenance."

On the negative side, he lists his **Husqvarna 350** chain saw. "I've cut firewood for 30 years using two old Homelite saws, one 25 years old and the other 35. I thought it was time to upgrade so I bought this saw two years ago. Right out of the box the chain oiler didn't work, so the first year I didn't use this saw much and had to rely on my old models. The next year, the Husqvarna was only involved in making five loads of wood when the piston seized up in the cylinder. The company wouldn't stand behind its product. I tried to buy a repair kit, but the parts are so overpriced I think I'm just going to discard this saw. I learned my lesson."

Bill Allin, Chilliwack, B.C.: "The two AA batteries in my indoor-outdoor thermometer kept wearing out so I converted it to run off a 110-volt adapter. I cut two lengths of 9/16-in. doweling the same length as the batteries and put a thumb tack on the end of each one. Then, I soldered wires from an AC adapter to the tacks. If I ever want to go back to batteries, I can just take out the dowels."

Francis Henderson, Brinston, Ontario: "My 2004 **New Holland TG210** tractor is a pleasure to operate. No problems."

"My 2005 **New Holland** big square baler works like a dream and has been trouble-free."

"My 2004 **J-Star Van Dale 53-bu.** feed cart is my worst buy. It has a bad paint job, a very loud muffler, and the 9 hp Honda engine has caused nothing but trouble. Gas keeps getting into the oil, but the dealer told me I had to go to the company for help. I've had to change the needle and carburetor, all at my own expense. The company gave me every excuse in the book why the problem was my fault. They also said that I have to turn the gas off whenever the machine is not in use. I have six other Honda engines, and I don't have to shut the fuel off on any of them."

Ray Whatley, Bastrop, Texas: A 2000 **Chevrolet 5500** pickup equipped with a 210 hp Caterpillar diesel engine and Allison transmission and dually wheels rates as Ray's "best buy". "This pickup is heavy enough to haul anything and to pull any trailer. I sat without a bed on the dealer's lot for a couple of years before I bought it. I asked the dealer if he would take the bed off another 2003 model that was on the lot and put it on this model, and he did."

"My 1990 **Dodge 3/4-ton** pickup equipped with a diesel engine has always run well but initially it had head gasket and transmission problems. It took 15 years to get the bugs worked out. Now this pickup has more than 300,000 miles on it."

Larry Tripp, Nardin, Okla.: "I'm generally pleased with my 2004 **Dodge 4-WD** pickup equipped with a diesel engine. However, the oil in the front and rear differentials is supposed to be changed every 15,000 miles or else you risk voiding the warranty. Manufacturers have been using 90-weight oil for years with little or no failure during the life of a vehicle. This oil change requirement isn't improving the pickups - it's a scam."

David H. Chadbourne, Harmony, Maine: David likes his 2003 **Chevrolet 3500** pickup equipped with a Duramax diesel engine and 6-speed transmission. "It has a comfortable ride and exceptional power."

"My 2003 **Fisher Minute Mount** snowplow is my worst buy. This snowplow is difficult to mount unless it's on a cement floor in a heated garage. I've had to take it back for wiring problems, because the plow

wouldn't lift or change angles and the lights didn't work. I changed the wiring harness and the lights, but they still don't work unless I wiggle the connectors. I'm very disappointed with this snowplow."

Fritz Groszkruger, Dumont, Iowa: "Our **Gehl Scavenger II** model 309 manure spreader is our worst buy. The only manure that comes out is whatever the auger touches. I have to push the load into the auger by hand about three times per load. The company gave me some ideas, but basically said that conditions must be perfect or it won't work. In my opinion, that doesn't cut it for a spreader that was advertised as a machine that can handle all types of manure. I offered the company rep \$50 per load to haul out the last three loads from our manure pile, but I never heard back from him."

"If anyone knows how to solve this problem, I'd like to hear from them. I wouldn't sell this spreader to my worst enemy. I'd rather find a way to make it work."

William Lukinich, Niniilchik, Alaska: "Our **Husky 41** chain saw is our worst buy. More gas has leaked out of the gas cap than has gone through the engine. This chain saw was hard to start when we got it, and the problem has only become worse. Some days this saw starts and some days it doesn't, so we haven't used it a lot. It wouldn't even make a good boot anchor. It's the last Husky I'll buy."

"Our 1997 **Honda Foreman** has been trouble-free and is our best buy. It's a real workhorse. We use it to harrow our field and to drag in logs to our mill or for firewood. We use it both summer and winter."

Richard "Red" Guthrie, Early, Tenn.: "My 2003 **Hummer H2** is my worst buy. I bought it equipped with all the options, from a 9,000-lb. winch on front to a combination gun safe on back. I paid \$72,600 for what I

thought was the toughest and best vehicle General Motors had to offer. However, I immediately noticed the wiring for the rear camera system had heat damage because it was located too close to the exhaust system. My lawyer had to threaten to sue before the dealer would replace it."

"All the optional equipment was factory or dealer-installed when I bought this vehicle. To date, the overhead lights have had to be sealed where rain leaked through. The rear door weather stripping continuously fell off until it was reglued."

"While I was on a trip to Virginia in 2004 the dealer fixed the exhaust leaks, repaired the shift handle on the transmission, replaced the volume control on the steering wheel which had shorted out, and replaced a defective carrier latch for the spare tire. The exhaust system was repaired two more times before the warranty expired. The cruise control double or triple downshifted on hills and used 25 percent more fuel whenever it was in use. Also, the big chrome Hummer letters fell off and had to be replaced."

"Three batteries also had to be replaced before the warranty expired."

"I notified Hummer's general manager several times but never got an answer. When the batteries go out this vehicle is locked down and the driver is totally helpless, with no way to get in or out, no OnStar, and no phone. This is dangerous for a disabled person like myself."

Richard Gribbins, Bradfordsville, Ky.: "I like my 2003 **M&W 5506** round baler which makes a 5 by 5-ft. bale. It calls for a 55 hp tractor, but a Ford 3950 45 hp tractor can easily pull it. I've made about 2,050 bales with no problems. This baler doesn't have many moving parts to wear out, and it seems like it would be easy to work on."

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