

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

vice. It's not a big power house machine, but it gets me where I want to go. I just purchased a used 1998 model and hope to get the same service from it.

"The **Lenox** gas furnace we bought new in 1998 has caused us nothing but trouble. It's extremely noisy. The dealer has been out three or four times but can't seem to fix it. It came with a five-year warranty, but the warranty covers only one year on labor. The warranty has expired now, so it's time to either start repairing it or replace it."

Steve LaSowski, Middle Lake, Sask.: "I'm pleased with the 16-ft. gooseneck tandem cattle trailer I bought from **Innovative Industries** (Porcupine Plain, Sask., Canada ph 306 278-2975. It's easy to pull and hook up, has good doors and latches, and a paint job that resists stone chips. Also, it has good brake control.

"My **Bale King** bale processor is equipped with a fine cut attachment that I really like. It does a good job of feeding and bedding livestock and is easy to hook up. It's a low-maintenance machine.

Vince and Sheryl Manhart, Palestine, Ill.: "My 2002 **Bush Hog** Batwing mower is a best buy. It takes all the work out of mowing very easy to operate, even on the roughest ground."

James Harmon, Uncasville, Ct.: "My worst buy was a 2000 **Chevrolet** Silverado pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine. During the first year of use this pickup was returned to the dealer five different times for an annoying problem with exhaust vibration, and twice for a starting problem in cold weather, which turned out to be a defective fuel pump. After the 3-year, 36,000-mile warranty expired, I had two more fuel pump failures, two shorted distributor caps, one shorted coil, and an internal coolant leak, all

"During the first year of use this pickup was returned to the dealer five times."

before the pickup had 45,000 miles on it. I traded it in for a **Toyota** Tacoma and couldn't be happier."

Shauna and Brent Sereda, Thorsby, Alberta: "My husband likes his **Allis Chalmers** 190 XT tractor. It was his first major tractor purchase when he started farming," says Shauna. "This tractor is easy to shift, and the cab has good visibility. We installed speakers and a cassette-radio in the cab. It's a nice tractor."

A 1998 **Homelite** Weedeater with 17 in. of cutting capacity rates as their "worst buy". "It worked well only for one summer. Then, even though it was stored in a dry shed, the primer bubble cracked and had to be replaced. The set screws to adjust the carburetor had plastic tops, which stripped after only a few adjustments were made. The slip clutch seized a few times even though it was kept dry. The fuel line was replaced twice as it, too, kept cracking. We're tired of fixing this tool every time we want to use it. It was officially retired last summer by a second hand **Ryobi** that looks the worse for wear, but actually works. The Homelite was pampered and looks like new, but it was junk."

Rachel Crowe, Skull Valley, Ariz.: An **Airlift Technologies** water pumping windmill rates as Rachel's "best buy." (Airlift Technologies, Redlands, Calif. ph 877 793-3771; www.airlifttech.com). It pumps water by the use of an air injection pump. "It eliminates a lot of the expensive mechanical parts

found in other water pumping windmills, which lowers the cost of maintenance.

"The windmill is capable of pumping up to 30 gallons per minute and can be located up to a quarter mile away or wherever the wind reaches maximum velocity such as on



a nearby hill. It doesn't have to stand over the water source. All moving parts in the system are above ground. There are no cylinders, leathers or plunger-type assemblies as in other water pumping systems. It can be installed by one person in less than a day.

"It aerates the water as it pumps, so we don't need to use chemicals in our 2,000-gal. storage tank. Another advantage is that it's designed to tolerate wind gusts up to 80 mph."

James McLaughlin, Mannville, Alberta: "My 1962 **Deere** 4010 tractor has been more or less totally rebuilt over the years but is still a great tractor. It's my best buy of all time."

James is a dealer for **Star Choice** satellite TV systems which he says is a "best buy." "I've had problems with less than 5 percent of all the systems I've installed. Being a dealer is a rewarding and enjoyable way to supplement my income."

Mike Appec, Pipestone, Minn.: "Our **Maytag** Performa automatic dishwasher is our worst buy. The main pump water seal has been replaced twice, and the door seal started leaking right after we bought it. This machine seems to make more noise as it gets older. Also, we have to pre-rinse our plates and pans so it will clean them."

Gary Max Busler, Blaine, Tenn.: "Last August we bought a used 1999 **Ford** F-150 4-WD Supercab pickup equipped with a 5.4-liter, EFI V-8 engine and an electronic 4-speed automatic transmission with overdrive. It's a really nice pickup and is fuel efficient, getting about 22 mpg on the highway. Unlike older Ford models, when the transmission goes into overdrive it doesn't jerk as you go down the road. I'm really proud of this pickup."

Richard "Red" Guthrie, Brownwood, Texas: "My 2003 **H2 Hummer** is a great vehicle but the warranty on it is worthless or even less than worthless, especially for a \$72,600 vehicle. A lot of the problem was with the dealer, but I also personally sent two registered letters to the company chief executive officer and never even got a reply."

Earl Ray Zimmerman, Ephrate, Penn.: "My 2004 **New Holland** BR 740 'silage special' round baler is my best buy. It makes 4 by 5 bales that weigh about 900 lbs. apiece. It bales faster than my old NH 648 model ever did. I used it last year to make about 4,500 bales. I can average 45 bales per hour with three wraps of mesh. My only complaint is that the endless belts need to be improved. I tore five of the baler's six belts."

Nick Hatley, Matthews, N.C.: Nick bought a 2004 **Deere** 2210 compact tractor for his lawn care business and says it's his "best buy." "I used it one time with a brush cutter to mow down heavy brush. This tractor isn't much bigger than a riding mower, yet it was able to mow down trees up to six



Jason Becker makes short work of cutting his large yard, thanks to his 10-ft. mower built out of an Owatonna swather.

10-Ft. "Swather" Lawn Mower

When Jason Becker of Virden, Ill., is out mowing his family's lawn, he gets a lot of attention from passersby who are amazed by his giant mower.

Becker makes short work of cutting his large yard thanks to his 10-ft. mower built out of an Owatonna swather. He bought the big rig "as is" off a dealer lot and doesn't know who did the conversion.

"I bought it about three years ago and I just love it," Becker says. "It cut the time I spend mowing in half compared to the 72-in. mower I used to use, and it's so much fun to operate."

The original swather head was removed and a 3-pt. hitch and pto shaft was mounted on front for connecting to the back of a mower deck.

Becker's 10-ft. finishing mower deck has three large (2-ft. dia.) steel discs under the deck. Each disc has four 8 to 10-in. blades on it. This deck is made by Befco, Becker says.

He also has a Bush Hog deck for longer grass and rougher terrain.

inches in diameter. It pulled through mud, rocks and vines and got the job done."

Alan Slovick, Soldiers Grove, Wis.: Alan likes his **Milwaukee** 14.4-volt cordless drill. "It really came in handy when I needed to do structural work on a barn with no electricity. I used it to drill more than 200 Ω -in. dia. holes through 12-in. white oak timbers that were 100 years old and hard as a rock. This drill paid for itself on that job alone. Later on, I purchased the flashlight that can be used with it. The flashlight takes the same batteries. I liked it so well that after using it for a week I threw away my shop trouble light. The batteries have lasted several years and are still as good as new. It's a wonderful tool.

"My **Strait Line** laser level is my worst buy. I used it one time to put up concrete forms. Later I found the level was off by 1 in. for every 10 ft., and now I have a 26-ft. long building that's 2 Ω in. out of level. The local hardware store cheerfully refunded my money but I still have a crooked building."

Joseph S. Yonick, Shickshinny, Penn.: "I had trouble catching mice with a regular mouse trap, although I did find that sprinkling grated Parmesan cheese over and around the trap worked better than placing a piece of cheese on the trigger. Finally I purchased an enclosed trap made by **Decon**, and it worked great. My mouse catch is now down to zero.

"My **Suzuki** 500 ATV equipped with an

The mower is powered by a 6-cyl. Ford engine. "I'd like to know where it came from originally, and who built it," he says.

The rig is hydrostatic, with a zero turning radius, so even though it's big, it's very maneuverable.

"The thing that makes this thing so good is that it spins so dang fast," he says. "It's very easy to switch from one deck to the other, and you can even hook up a snow-blower, tiller, sprayer or blade."

The mower's 10-ft. wheel base provides good stability. Another feature of the rig is an air compressor and air tank mounted on the side that are used to power an air cylinder on an idler pulley clutch that engages the mower deck. "With the air compressor right on board, I can blow the radiator out, or fill up the tires wherever I happen to be," notes Becker.

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automatic transmission is my worst buy. I had trouble shifting it from park into all the other gears, and the dealer, who is located 30 miles away, wasn't able to solve the problem. I wouldn't recommend this ATV to anyone."

Blaine Runner, Ashby, Neb.: "My 1978 **Deere** 4040 MFWD tractor equipped with a model 158 front-end loader and grapple fork is my best buy. The loader has been on the tractor ever since I bought it. I've used this tractor continuously for ranch work, putting up hay during the summer, and feeding hay during the winter. The engine and front axle parts both were overhauled once. The powershift transmission never wore out but the shifter lever did. The tractor now has 15,000 to 20,000 operating hours, much of them at reduced rpm's."

Harold Bottoms, Eldon, Mo.: "This is a great little utility tractor," says Harold about his **Deere** 2040 tractor equipped with a 40 hp engine. "I bought it used in 1998. It had 3,100 hours on it and now has about 5,000 trouble-free hours. It always starts right up and it's easy on fuel."

Warren Wing, Newkirk, Okla.: "My 2001 **Stihl** 021 chain saw is my best buy. I've used Stihl chain saws for many years. Four years ago we had a terrible ice storm, leaving my yard full of broken tree limbs and also a lot of limbs down around edges of fields. I bought this saw to clean up the brush. It starts

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