

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
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John W. Westerberg, Brainerd, Minn.: “I agreed with the recent FARM SHOW report by Guy Ramsey about fuel pumps installed inside fuel tanks. I’ve had three fuel pumps replaced in various vehicles over the past five years and they were all located inside fuel tanks. The most costly was \$700 I spent at the local Ford dealer to replace the pump in our 1987 Mallard motorhome. The other fuel pumps cost about \$300 apiece and involved a GM car and a GM pickup. I think it’s a crime to put fuel pumps inside the tank. I’d like to hear from someone who has gotten around the terrific expense involved.”

David Cast, Beaver Crossing, Neb.: A 2000 Arctic Cat 500 rates as David’s “worst buy.” “For the first 1 1/2 years it ran great, but then last year everything on it began to fail including CV boots, fuel gauge, belt, and clutch. Also, the block casting broke. No one is even willing to make an offer for a trade-in on this machine. I’ll never buy another Arctic Cat.”

Carroll Braddock, Johnsonville, Ill.: “Back in 1975 I bought an International Harvester 1206 tractor that already had 4,500 hours on it. Over the years I’ve kept a record of the repairs I’ve made to it. I’ve spent

Chalmers 7000 and a Deutz 6206 for this tractor and paid plenty to boot. Everything on it went wrong. All the hydraulics went out as well as the oil pump and most of the gauges. I also had problems with the fuel pump, governor, and a sensor on the flywheel. A wheel bearing went out one day while I was cutting corn silage. I had to take the tractor back to the dealer seven times, and he’s located 120 miles away. The company did pay for some of the repairs, but I had to pay for others. This winter the starter went out and had to be rebuilt. The fuel injector cracked last fall while I was cutting corn silage and fuel got in the oil. They replaced one injector, but the fuel pump cost me more than \$2,300. The tractor needed other work which could’ve been done before the warranty expired, but the dealer was too busy and the warranty ran out.

“On the other hand, my 1982 Allis Chalmers 6080 tractor, which I bought used, is still going strong.”

Jon J. White, Warrenton, Va.: “My Lincoln 3-ton floor jack works smooth and doesn’t bleed down like my old Sears jack did. The handle release is easy and controllable.”

Clark Carpenter, Hamilton, Montana: “In 2003 I bought an 18-volt Milwaukee drill/driver and it’s my best buy. It’s powerful and dependable. It has carbide jaws in the ratchet chuck so it doesn’t slip and it can be easily handled with one hand. The batteries charge quickly and last a long time. The company even gave me a free third battery.

“My 18-volt and 24-volt Tornado drills, which I bought from a catalog called Heartland, are my worst buys. These drills are less than worthless. Even after a fresh charge they’re powerless and go dead.”

Dan Gilgleyen, Tecumseh, Mich.: “I’m well pleased with my 2003 Kubota 6800 tractor. It has about 400 hours on it and is always ready to go. This 68 hp tractor uses about 1 gallon of diesel fuel per hour. It could use a little more weight. I loaded the tires and will be putting wheel weights on, too. Also, it could use more rear lights for night work.”

Lonnie J. Wallace, Jerico Springs, Mo.: “I like Red Coat gas tank sealer and ER oil additive. They both work great.

“My 1992 Campbell Hausfeld 7 1/2 hp air compressor is a best buy. It works good and will keep up with two air tools at once.

“In 1966 I bought a Lincoln 180-amp welder and it has worked perfect ever since. It does need new cables now.

“My Select Comfort airbed is outstanding. It’s the only way to sleep.”

The Reliance engine kit he installed in his Deere 4020 tractor is his “worst buy.” “After installation the engine smoked and pumped oil out of the muffler. It wouldn’t start in cool weather and was very hard to start in warm weather. All this even though I followed instructions to the letter. When I was installing the sleeves and pistons, I called the company and told them the rings weren’t seating correctly. They had me try all kinds of things to get the rings to seat. After three months they gave up, but they still wouldn’t replace the bad part and wanted me to buy another kit. No way was I going to do that. Instead I decided to use Deere parts and had no more trouble after that.”

T.E. Salsman, Richmond, Ky.: “My MTD Yard Machine wheeled string trimmer, equipped with a 3 1/2 hp Tecumseh engine and an 18-in. cut, is my best buy. The offset cutterhead works perfect for trimming under my 800-ft. long board fence. This trimmer also has adequate power for 90 percent of my other cutting chores, such as along pond banks.”

Pat Prom, Eden Prairie, Minn.: “My Deere 870 tractor equipped with a 3-cylinder and 28 hp diesel engine is my best buy. I

just \$1,600 on repairs not counting new tires, batteries, and alternators. The engine has never been overhauled. I put an Oil Refiner on it 25 years ago which provides three more gallons of oil and has a heat plate on top of it that takes all the moisture out of the oil. It works a lot like the ones on semi tractors. This old tractor now has right at 11,000 hours on it. The engine still uses very little oil.”

Doyle Van Wey, Salina, Kansas: “About 40 years ago I bought a Stanley thermos bottle. Last year, after many falls from trucks, tractors, etc., it stopped keeping my coffee hot. I was going to toss it but my wife said it’s guaranteed for life so she boxed it up and sent it in. A short time later a box arrived in the mail containing a new thermos. That’s what I call standing behind your product.”

Charles R. Campanella, Kenmore, N.Y.: “My 2002 Deere 5102 tractor is built rugged. No problems. My only suggestion would be to reroute the control wires for the lights and the gas tank. The wires are routed along the bottom of the tractor, which could create a problem when working in heavy brush.”

Steven Hawkins, Booneville, Ark.: Steven’s happy with his 1997 Deere 970 tractor equipped with a Deere 430 quick tach front-end loader. “The loader goes on and off easily, with no tools needed to hook it up. I do think the emergency brake release needs to be relocated.”

Rocky Stehle, Theodosta, Mo.: Two white silos from Star Silos (St. Genevieve Ill.) rate as Rocky’s “best buys.” One silo was put up in 1977 and the other in 1990. “These silos have never needed resurfacing, although they were used every day until 2001 when we sold our milk cows. Now we use them to feed corn silage to our feeder cattle from November through April.”

A 1996 AGCO 8610 2-WD tractor rates as his “worst buy.” “I traded in an Allis