

## BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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**Lee Vrzalik, Innis, Tex.:** “I wanted to tell other FARM SHOW readers about my experience with the **Magnum** cutting torch featured in the last issue of FARM SHOW. After buying one and using it, I don’t recommend it for the average farmer. It burns very hot but it’s difficult to control and expensive to run. I work on transmissions and thought it would be ideal for cutting gears and other parts. But it burns so fast there is very little time to work, and the rod must be held at a precise angle. Very difficult to use.

“I called the company in California and they weren’t much help. I’m heading to California soon and asked if I could stop by for some pointers but they said they don’t do that and that I should look at the instructions on their website. That didn’t help much although I found out the torch is primarily designed as an underwater cutting torch. When I asked about returning it, they said if I had started it up it could not be returned. I don’t think this is the right torch for the average guy.”

**Everett W. Gustafson, Brockway, Penn.:** “I have a **Deere** 318 garden tractor. I built a cab for it and a snow plow. I don’t have to take off the mower in winter. I just leave it in place for the extra weight. In the summer,

years ago Gaylen bought a used 1995 **Deere** 6810 self-propelled forage harvester. He says it’s his “worst buy” ever. “The first season it had some electronic problems caused by internal heat. The dealer said he would send someone out to look at it - at \$45 per hour.

“The second year with this machine could best be described as a living hell. It was constantly having electronic troubles. The only thing that worked consistently was the radio, which would tell me every hour about Deere’s wonderful parts and service program. That fall during corn silage harvest I had to replace the blower band, which is the highest wear item on the machine. It took three men eight hours to do the job. Then, a week later, the blower assembly exploded and it took four men two days to replace it.

“All fall the machine ran trouble-free for a total of only five days. By the end of the silage harvest season I was calling the machine my ‘Patsy Cline,’ because whenever I walked by it she fell to pieces. Deere’s solution to the problem was to say ‘buy a newer one, they’re better.’ In the two years that I owned the machine it lost \$60,000 of its value, and I had to spend more than \$40,000 just to try to keep it running. If that’s the best they can do I’ll never buy another piece of Deere equipment. My dealer tried to help me but I got no product support from the company.”

**John Brady, Downey, Idaho:** “In general terms, the quality of steel used in new equipment is softer and lighter than that used in older (i.e. 1950-1975) farm equipment. We’ve noticed this problem mostly in tillage and haying equipment. As a result, we end up having to do more welding repairs than should be necessary.”

**Mrs. O.J. Gorringer, Sayward, B.C.:** “I like **Honda** pumps and generators, as well as Honda lawn equipment including mowers and weed eaters. They’re trouble-free and come with a hassle-free warranty, and they start easy. Being able to pull-start a machine is a top priority for me.”

**Frank L. Johnson, Arbon, Idaho:** “My **DR** trimmer mower is my best buy. I’ve used it for four years with no problems, replacing one belt and a bearing in the cutterhead. I’ve used it to cut waist-high wild rye out of fence lines.”

**Olen C. Gray, New Site, Miss.:** “I like my 1982 **Massey Ferguson** 245 tractor equipped with a 42 hp diesel engine. It has a lot of power for a garden tractor and I like the power steering. It will pull any kind of 2-row equipment.

“My 2001 **Deere** 235 riding mower equipped with a hydrostatic transmission is a best buy. It mows evenly and is easy to operate.

“My 1990 **Troy Built** garden tiller is the best on the market.”

**Steve and Jane Weiss, Augusta, Wis.:** “My 2002 **Chevrolet** Suburban Z-71 pickup has a great ride and trailers well. Acceleration is smooth and handling superb. My model is equipped with an ‘On Star’ system which works well.”

**Valice Cargill, Stockton, Mo.:** “My 2000 **Ford** Ranger pickup never got more than 16 mpg so I took it back to the dealer. They said nothing was wrong with it. I removed the air cleaner and found the area behind it was stuffed full of cloth fibers. I thought removing them would solve the problem, but it only got worse. I finally traded it even up for a 1998 Dodge Ram 4-WD pickup. It was the best trade I ever made.”

**Wayne Eltiste, Tecumseh, Neb.:** “My 2000 **H & S Hy-Cap** 12-wheel hay rake is my best buy. It does a great job of following the ground and makes a good, square windrow. If I want I can make a windrow so big it’s hard to get it into the baler. It sure cuts down on baling time.

“My **International** Harvester Farmall 906

# Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

I pull three 20-in. pull-type mowers off to one side of the mower, adding 60 in. to the mower’s 50-in. width. The 318 is a very good lawn tractor.”

**Dan Hill, Dixmont, Maine:** “I read a comment in a previous issue about a farmer who complained that his 4-in. grinder would not cut 1 in. pipe. I thought that was a good example of improper use of a tool. I’ve used a **Black & Decker** 4 1/2-in. grinder for several years and it does a good job sharpening mower knives, removing welds, cutting off rusted muffler clamps, etc. Cutting off pipe and steel stock is best done with a powered hack saw, not a grinder. Anyone who expects a \$20 grinder to do heavy work like that will be disappointed. In short, you need to use the proper tool for the job at hand. Don’t expect a Ford 9N to pull a 5-bottom plow.”

**Mike Hanley, Cashton, Wis.:** Mike’s “worst buy” is **Sani-Tred** from Ideal Products of Plymouth, Ind. It’s a liquid rubber coating for floors and walls. “I used it on the floor of the recreation room in our home’s basement. It’s supposed to permanently waterproof any concrete or wood surface without creating any odors or toxic fumes.

“My problem was that the second coat wouldn’t stick to the first coat so it peeled up in sheets, resulting in total failure. I called the company and they said I got a bad batch. They told me to try one of their other products and put the second coat over that. However, that failed, too. This time I took photos, sent samples and wrote a letter to the company, but they didn’t answer. I waited 30 days and sent a follow-up letter. Again, no reply. I’m now out \$1,000 and six months time on a job that should have taken no more than seven days and cost no more than \$300. And, I still have to clean up the mess that was made, which will be a big job.”

**Gaylen Meiburg, Melvin, Iowa:** Three

## 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  
www.FARMSHOW.com,  
or E-mail your comments to:  
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