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Henry Boutin, Carlyle, Sask.: "My 1998 Dodge 2500 pickup, equipped with a 24-valve diesel engine and 5-speed transmission, is my worst buy. It's a good solid pickup, but it's hard on fuel and the dealer claims the fuel efficiency can't be improved. At about 50,000 miles a lock nut backed off inside the transmission, which caused fifth gear to quit working. The dealer wanted \$1,000 to repair it. I called the Daimler Chrysler headquarters but they didn't seem the least bit interested. I had the transmission repaired at a reliable trans-

"My dealer said they had already repaired more than 30 pickups with the same problem."

mission shop for \$450. My dealer said they had already repaired more than 30 pickups that had the same problem. I'll buy from Ford the next time around."

Paul Price, Goldston, N.C.: "My Husqvarna 136 chain saw is my worst buy. It starts hard whether it's hot or cold out. After limited use it started leaking fuel, and we've had trouble getting it repaired. When it does run, it cuts fine and has ample power for its size."

Danny Hudson, Middleton, Tenn.: "My worst buy is Owen Corning roofing. I built a new home in 1992 and used this roofing because I thought a name brand with a guarantee would be the best way to go. Boy, was I wrong. Within the first year the roofer had to come back three different times to replace shingles. I called the supplier and they said that the roofer had installed the shingles wrong.

"For five years I got the run-around and for five years the roofer had to keep coming back. The problem was that the tar tabs weren't holding. The company that sold the roofing went out of business. I called Owen Corning to see about my guarantee. They told me to read the fine print. Apparently, the tar tabs are guaranteed for only five years. Also, they told me the 25-year guarantee covered only the sand on the shingles. You'd think a company as big as this one would guarantee its entire product, as the public is led to believe. But then on second thought, maybe that's how they got so big."

Gaston Hamoline, Domremy, Sask.: "My 1998 Dodge Ram 2500 4-WD pickup, equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and automatic transmission, is my worst buy. The steering box was hard to turn, which causes the vehicle to wander unpredictably. I really have to keep my eyes on the road. A new steering box solved the problem.

"I also had problems with the automatic transmission. Whenever I put it in gear it would behave like two gears were meshed so the pickup wouldn't move. I had the transmission and it's computer controls replaced, but it didn't solve the problem. So far I've had to pay half the cost of the new transmis-

sion. I'd like to know if other people have had these problems."

Hans Oostlander, Rosedale, B.C.: "My 1993 Dodge 150 4-WD pickup equipped with a 318 cu. in. Magnum engine is my best buy. It has more than 250,000 miles on it, and the drivetrain is completely original. The only problem I had was with the fuel pump."

Sam C. Parsons, Sugar Grove, Va.: Sam says his Sears Craftsman 2 hp 7 1/4-in. Skil saw is his "worst buy". "I'm a building contractor so I use many different brands of tools. This one didn't last even one day on the job. I sent it back to the factory for repairs and had to wait about three months to get it back. Then I was able to make only about 10 cuts with it before it blew up again. Again, I had to wait three months to get it back, and this time I got a \$45 bill for repairs. That's when I decided to throw the saw in the trash. I currently use Makita, DeWalt, and Milwaukee tools. No more Sears Craftsman power tools for me."

Bill Smyth, Langley, B.C.: Bill's impressed with his New Holland 648 Silage Special round baler. "I've used or tested numerous round balers over the past five years, and this one consistently makes the best bales without needing much operator intervention."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his Cub Cadet riding mower. "The belts keep breaking and the dealer can't do anything about it. The maintenance required on this machine is expensive and time consuming."

Alan Smock, Dubois, Ind.: "I bought a product called Whip Battery Protector at the 2000 Louisville Farm Show and it's my worst buy. It's made by PRO-TEC of Humboldt, Kansas, and is supposed to prevent corrosion on battery terminals. I applied it to the cleaned terminals on my riding mower and two tractors. What a mistake. The product appears to be oil-based and when it got hot, the material apparently worked its way between the terminal and the battery post, preventing current flow. Before the summer was over, I had taken apart all of the battery connections and scraped the product off the terminals and the battery posts. The product actually caused the problem that it was advertised to prevent.

"When I went back to the Louisville show this year, I stopped by their booth and they were still selling the product. They said they had never heard of any problems but they offered a refund. I urge people not to use this product."

Orest Serediak, Andrew, Alberta: Orest owns a "best buy" Suzuki Quad 300 4-WD ATV equipped with an angling dozer blade. "It works great for pushing snow in our yard and driveway."

Rusty Jamison, Leavenworth, Kansas: "I like my 3/8-in., 14.4-volt Chicago Electric cordless drill. I bought it for \$39.99, which I think was a good price.

"My MTD 10 hp chipper-shredder is my worst buy. Before I bought it I called the company to make sure the machine would handle black walnuts. They said it would so I bought it. However, I've found it blows the walnuts right through the side of the plastic hopper."

Roger Duff, New Holland, Ohio: Roger says his Sears Home Central furnace, which he bought in 1997, is his "worst buy". "I bought it because their price was about \$1,000 less than other models but last January the furnace quit. Sears couldn't come out for two weeks to make repairs, so I called another furnace repair service. I was informed



1918 Grain Drill Still Plants Every Year

Every year since 1918, the Gilbertson family of Hollandale, Wis., has used their Van Brunt grain drill to seed oats and grass.

The 8-ft. wide steel-wheeled drill originally had two tongues and was designed to be pulled by three horses. Today, it still has steel wheels, but the two tongues have been replaced by a single one that attaches to their 20 hp Ferguson tractor.

The grain drill was purchased in February 1918 by Martin Gilbertson. "It came on the railroad in a package. The implement dealer my father bought it from had already been drafted for World War I and wasn't around to assemble it, so my father had to put it together," says Otis, Martin's son.

Otis's son Mark and grandson Erik now use the drill so it has been used by the family for four generations and recently planted its 83rd crop. The men use the drill to plant 15 to 20 acres every year.

"My father enjoyed pulling it with the horses but quit operating it once the horse tongues were removed in the early 1950's," says Otis. "From then on, my brother Burnell or I have operated it every year. We even used it to plant Roundup Ready soybeans last year, with great success."

The Gilbertsons say they've received some good-natured teasing from neighbors for planting with the drill. But Otis says they've

also received compliments on how well-seeded the fields are where the grain drill is used. "The drill doesn't have a metering system - you just pull a lever to open or shut the openings inside the boxes. The seed openings are worn so it seeds heavier than when it was new."

The drill is still made of its original wood, which Otis sprays with linseed oil every year.

"People ask us what we do for parts, but we don't need any because the drill is made well and dad took care of it," says Otis. "We keep it in a shed all the time, even at night during the planting season."

Otis says that the grain drill hasn't ever needed much for repairs, but they have fixed a couple problems on it. "One problem was that grass seed dropped in front of the discs and got covered too deep. We wanted to leave the seed on top so we extended the seed tubes and ran them out behind. We also had a problem with dirt getting into bearings on the discs. We solved the problem by knocking the porcelain off spark plugs and attaching them to the discs. Other than that, we've never put a new part on the drill."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Otis Gilbertson, Box 83, Hollandale, Wis. 53544 (ph 608 967-2120).

that the heat exchanger was cracked and that since this company didn't install the furnace, they would have to charge for repairs. They told me the furnace wasn't installed correctly which was why the exchanger had failed. However, they said that since the furnace was under warranty, Sears would repair the furnace under warranty.

"When Sears finally showed up, the technician informed me that I would have to pay for parts, but they would cover the cost for labor. When I asked why, I was informed that Sears doesn't honor the warranty on its products if they're installed by an independent contractor. Since the service call was the result of faulty installation, Sears then refused to honor any of the warranty and charged the full repair bill for both parts and labor.

"Since virtually all of Sears home services are done by independent contractors, I don't think the company honors any warranty at all."

Ernie Downing, Hornbeak, Tenn.: Ernie's impressed with his Mahindra 5002 tractor equipped with a front-end loader. "I couldn't be more pleased. It has done everything I needed without any serious problems or downtime.

"My 1988 Deere 850 4-WD tractor was one of my worst buys ever. It was the hardest

tractor to get on or off I ever saw. It had brake problems all the time and also electric wiring problems. I traded it in for the Mahindra model and bless the day that it left our farm."

George W. Horst, Benton, La.: "My 1999 Stihl 021 chain saw has a chain that's easy to tighten and is well engineered. It's a quality product that works far better than the other two chain saws I've owned in the past."

David P. Thompson, Westminster, Md.: "My 1997 Chevrolet Malibu sedan is my best buy. Fully loaded, this car cost less and handles better than a Toyota Camry, or Honda Accord. It now has about 90,000 miles on it without any problems and continues to be absolutely reliable.

"I recently bought a Poulan chain saw that also works great."

Dan Shannon, Green Bay, Wis.: "My Homelite XL2 chain saw is my best buy. I bought this small, inexpensive saw to save wear and tear on my more expensive equipment when cutting brush, roots, stumps, etc., on my Christmas tree farm. I thought of it as a disposable product that would wear out in two years or so. However, I've owned this saw for more than five years and it still starts and runs well. During that time I've replaced one bar and about five chains."