

## 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

**Ralph Vonnahme, Breda, Iowa:** Ralph's had problems with his 1990 Case-IH 7120 Magnum tractor. "This tractor should have been painted yellow instead of red. In the first few months I had to rework the hydraulic system, air conditioner, replace all the sensors on the 3-pt., and adjust the power-shift transmission, throttle, and fuel injection system. Last spring I overhauled the engine, installing new sleeves and pistons, rod and main bearings. I sent the head out for repair and installed a new camshaft, bearings and lifters. I also installed six new injectors and new fuel, oil, water, and air filters. I replaced the left hand inspection door and a door mechanism on the cab. I rebuilt all of the hydraulic detent assemblies, replaced two hydraulic cables, and readjusted the flow controls. I had to recharge the accumulators and replace the clutch return spring, left hand arm rest, radio, speakers, and fuel tank sender. After the air conditioning system had been recharged three times, I finally replaced the air conditioning compressor.

"The 3-pt. sensors failed two more times and the center drawbar loosened up while hauling grain to town. All these problems occurred during about 18 months of use.

ft. wide. The monitor lets me know when the gate is closed, which side of the baler needs more hay, when the bale is done, when the bale is oversized, and when it's being wrapped. I've used it to make about 500 bales with no problems."

**Donald N. Miller, Mt. Pleasant, Penn.:** "Our Vicon CM165 disc mower is a best buy. We can pull it with our Ford 3000 tractor in 8th gear through very heavy hay. Really cuts haying time. We also use it in the folded-up transport position to trim along trails through our woods.

"Our 1990 Delta sander-grinder is a worst buy. The operator's manual said it should have a 1/2 hp motor, but the motor plate says it's 1/3 hp. When I called the company they said it was a misprint even though they've advertised it for a year at 1/2 hp. This is the second Delta tool I've used that was underpowered. The first was a Super 10 table saw that burned up two months after the warranty expired."

**Jeff Potter, Redwood Falls, Minn.:** Jeff says his 1974 Deere 4430 tractor heads his all-time "best buy" list. "It has 9,000 hours on it but the engine hasn't been touched. We had the injectors and pump checked at 6,500 hours and they were still within specifications. It starts good even in cold weather and doesn't use any oil. I use it to plant over 1,500 acres every year. It just keeps going and going.

"My 1987 Ford 1-ton dually crewcab pickup is a worst buy. The heater core leaked, the anti-lock brake light kept coming on, and the clutch slave cylinder went out twice. The starter doesn't engage all the time even though we've worked on it twice, and the front tires wear uneven. It's also a cold-blooded starter."

**Jim Holkesvig, Mayville, N.D.:** Jim's "best buy" is Agri-Cover grain box tarp (K and G Sales, Mayville, N.D. 58257). "It installs and rolls easy and stays tight even if it's rolled only half way across the box. Be sure to get the 12-in. end caps."

**Don Dockery, Vernon, Texas:** Don's pleased with Data Transmission Network (DTN), a satellite information service. "For a monthly fee of \$27 (after leasing the necessary equipment), I receive a large source of agri-business news and information including 75 pages of markets on grains, cotton, rice, etc., a livestock and weather segment complete with weather maps and radar photos, and USDA reports and commentaries. It's a great tool for marketing agricultural products."

**Mike Schultz, Byron, Minn.:** Mike's had good luck with a used Deutz DX140 tractor equipped with a 24-speed transmission. "It has good power, a nice cab, shifts easy and is fuel efficient.

"My Schuck cushion hitch 750 is a worst buy. If I don't use it often it rusts together so that I can't swing the hitch back. The handle also rusted up and broke off."

**Francis Henderson, Brinston, Ontario:** Francis nominates a 1991 Dodge D250 4-WD diesel truck equipped with a Cummins turbocharged engine as his "best buy". "It starts very easy at 0 degrees even when it's not plugged in. Has plenty of power for pulling our 20-ft. stock trailer.

"My 12-year-old Badger 80-ft. long belt feeder is a worst buy. Every time I turn it on I don't know whether it'll break or not. The cable that operates the plow is mounted between the belts which makes it very hard to work on. I removed the end shields to keep haylage from collecting and freezing. The plow continually collects haylage and if it isn't cleaned every day it'll break."

Fortunately, the company paid for nearly all the repairs under warranty. I finally decided that since they liked fixing this lemon so much they might as well own it. I sold it back to them."

**Kevin Stewart, Big Valley, Alberta:** Kevin's pleased with his 1990 Deere 9600 combine that he uses in small grains. "Unlike the 9500, the 9600 does what it's supposed to. It has big capacity, but the biggest improvement over the 8820 is even air distribution over the shaker shoe. For two years now we've basically set it once and never needed to make any more adjustments. It still has a problem saving barley like all conventional combines. Cab and operator comfort is second to none. The fuel tank could be moved some place where chaff doesn't circle around. The walkers could also do a better job of separating barley from the straw. If I were in the market I'd buy another one because we need straw for our cattle and a rotary combine can't fill this need."

**Jim Park, Kersey, Colo.:** Jim's pleased with his Roto-Mix 490-14 truck-mounted feed mixer. "It does an excellent job mixing everything from high roughage rations to high grain rations. It mixes fast and thoroughly with less horsepower than auger-type feed mixers. It's a very low-maintenance piece of equipment."

**Don K. Winfree, McLeansville, N.C.:** "It's simple and easy to operate," says Don about his "best buy" Deere 435 round baler. "It makes bales from 39 to 72 in. high and 4