

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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L. Keith Schumacher, Hemingford, Neb.: Kinze Mfg. repowered his 1983 Deere 8650 4-WD tractor with an 855 cu. in. 350 hp Cummins diesel engine. "It's a best buy. We've put about 400 hours on the new engine and are very pleased with it. It has much more power and torque than the Deere engine, which lasted only about 4,000 hours. The conversion didn't cost much more than it would have cost to repair the Deere engine."

William C. Farmer, Evington, Va.: "My 1988 Bush Hog 90-in. rotary cutter is a best buy. I've used it to cut both light and heavy grasses with good results."

Ed Sauerland, Okeana, Ohio: "My worst buy is Onduline roofing which I installed in 1977 on a new loafing barn for my dairy cattle. Three years after the building was constructed all the paint had washed off the roofing. The company said they'd furnish more paint if I'd do the labor. Now I have to repaint the roofing every three to five years. It needs to be painted again, but the roofing isn't worth painting because there are several small holes where it has worn through. When I purchased the roofing I was told that it would last for at least 25 years. However, it has been only 14 years and already it's completely worn out. I

the frame by a 3/4-in. rod that's welded in a manner that crystallized the metal causing it to break. The 3-pt. lift pins are held in place by 3/8-in. set screws that are too small to withstand side-forces from the 3-pt. arms. The pto driveline's universal joints don't stand up to normal use. I've had other problems with the mower. When I contacted the manufacturer, they said they weren't liable. It has cost me money in repair parts and down time."

Johnny Kyle, McCrory, Ark.: A 1991 Shelbourne Reynolds stripper header heads Johnny's "best buy" list. "It's a more efficient way to harvest rice. It lets me harvest faster with less grain damage and allows longer days in the field. I'm very happy with it. If the product holds up it'll revolutionize rice harvest."

Roger Bell, East Aurora, N.Y.: Roger's had problems with his 1986 GM K-2500 pickup equipped with a Chevrolet 350 cu. in. engine and traction lock axle. "The engine didn't work too well when I bought the pickup and was worn out at 36,500 miles. I've complained to GM a lot about the vehicle, but it seems like they consider me GM unfriendly. The best they can offer is that since I'm unhappy I have to buy a new vehicle and make every one at GM happy. The most they'll give me for my pickup is \$1,200. I'd like to replace the gas engine with a diesel engine."

David Peck, Oxnard, Calif.: "The 800-lb. 3-pt. lift arm limit is the only drawback to these small workhorses," says David, who otherwise is pleased with his Deere 750 and 770 4-WD tractors. "I've got 100 acres of raspberries on narrow, trellised rows and I use these tractors to do all of my cultivating and spraying. After three years I've had no major repairs. The tractors are easy to get on and off and easy to drive. They do a surprising amount of work for their size and horsepower."

Del Bates, Acme, Alberta: Del's satisfied with his 1990 Case-IH 1650 combine. "It's very trouble-free, easy to set, and convenient to service. The cab is quiet and the controls are easily accessible and offer positive response."

Dennis Kelsey, Lind, Wash.: Dennis owns a 1982 Gleaner N-5 combine. "We had problems with it for the first two seasons due mostly to poor assembly. After the warranty expired we tore it down and had internal components chromed and reassembled. Since then we've had seven good seasons with it. Because of its large capacity and speed we were able to replace four Gleaner MH Hillside combines with two N-5 combines. We routinely travel 6 to 7 mph in 35 to 40 bu. per acre wheat with cut straw lengths of 24 in. or less. With wheat yields in the teens to twenties this year we've been traveling 8 to 10 mph which shortens harvest time a lot. We also like the 200-bu. capacity grain bin. Two dumps fills a truck. Of course it could use improvements, but I understand that most of them have already been made on the company's new Series II combines. We still use the original header bottoms. We've harvested almost 2,000 acres per machine per year."

Jim Cross, Alexander, N. Dak.: Jim's impressed with his 1990 Gehl 7285 mixer feeder wagon. "The four augers do an excellent job of mixing and the gear drive works great because it reduces the number of chains. The built-in scale eliminates variations in our feed rations. It's maintenance-free and easy to read."

"Our 1980 Deere 4840 2-WD tractor is fuel-efficient and has lots of power. It has

wouldn't recommend it to anyone."

Doug Kroeger, Byron, Neb.: Doug isn't pleased with Goodyear tires. "I bought two radial rear tractor tires and after six months the lugs started to separate. I spoke to three different people at the company and got three different stories. Goodyear doesn't care about farmers."

George Oliver, Fairview, Alberta: "I've owned other Case tractors before, but this one is the best yet," says George about his 1991 Case-IH 9230 tractor. "It's a pleasure to drive, is very easy on fuel, and has lots of power."

Kenneth Metrick, Butler, Penn.: "It's very well-built and engineered," says Kenneth, owner of a "best buy" 1990 Woods Dixie Cutter 3-pt. rotary mower. "It does a good job of cutting and runs smooth and quiet. It's only 5 ft. wide, but it's constructed out of heavier material than what the competition uses on bigger mowers. I'm well pleased with it."

Loren Forbes, Iowa City, Iowa: "The best buy I've made is my Stihl Wood Boss 024AV chain saw. I decided to try it after owning two other name brand chain saws. It's light enough that it doesn't tire me out, yet it'll cut the largest trees. It's by far the best chain saw I've ever purchased. I highly recommend it to anyone."

Thomas Cathey, Covington, Texas: Thomas is the owner of a "worst buy" 1989 New Idea 5409 9-ft. disc mower. "The carrier and cutter frames are poorly designed. The safety breakaway box is held to

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OPINION