

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

by Harold Johnson
Editorial Director

Mark Newhall
Editor

Bill Gergen
Associate Editor

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Tim Flannery, Somerset, Penn.: Tim's "worst buy of all time" is his 1990 Deere 7200 corn planter. "This planter is a real lemon. All the bolted-on parts are falling off including gauge wheels, closing wheels, and other parts that we've left scattered throughout my fields. I've had more trouble with it in one season than I had in nine years with my previous 7000 planter. The dealer and company are working on the problems. I hope they solve them."

Tim's "best buy" is his 1990 Ford F-350 7.3-liter diesel truck. "I like the performance and economy. It's equipped with a DMI cushion hitch that absorbs the shock of heavy towed loads."

Lee Hale, Manlius, N.Y.: Lee's "best buy" is his 1990 Krause model 6413 25-ft. disk. "It weighs seven tons and is built with cushion gangs that hold up well on our rocky soil. Other disks we've tried required much more repair."

Lee's "worst buy" is his 1990 New Holland model 411 discbine. "We hadn't even used this machine a year when one of the rotors froze up. The dealer installed an all-new cutterbar because it was cheaper than repairing it. The company wouldn't take care of the repairs because the warranty started at the date of purchase (winter) not

Galen Rozenboom, Sully, Iowa: "It does an excellent job of spreading any type of manure from hard-frozen to sloppy. Works great," says Galen, owner of a 1990 Ford New Holland 305 side delivery manure spreader.

Norman Rozendaal, Monroe, Iowa: Norman's happy with his 1990 Case-IH 900 Cyclo 6-row no-till corn planter. "It has performed beyond my highest expectations and plants accurately and at the correct population even at high planting speeds. It lets me plant soybeans by the number of plants per acre instead of pounds per acre. Maintenance is low."

On the "worst buy" side, "My Snapper LT11 riding lawn mower is a piece of junk. It doesn't stand up to ordinary farm yard use. The springs that hold the drive discs together failed so it wouldn't go forward and the handle that's used to adjust deck height broke off. The cable that holds the flip-top hood over the engine broke causing the hood to fall forward on the ground, breaking the headlight wires."

William Lansaw, Greenfield, Ill.: William purchased his "worst buy" 48 by 72-ft. building from F.S. Services Co. in 1987. "The roof has always leaked. The company has worked on it several times and even installed a new skylight, but it still leaks. They just can't seem to solve the problem."

Milo Crubel, Bloomington, Wis.: Milo's had good luck with his 1990 Deere 4755 tractor. "Field conditions last spring were bad, but the tractor performed so well it saved us a lot of time and fuel."

Dale Strom, Carson, N. Dak.: Dale's "best buy" is a line of cattle handling equipment from Stur-D Product Co. (RR 1, Box 8, Carson, N. Dak.) "Their products are built with heavy-duty oil field pipe. They build round bale feeders, corral panels, cattle working tubs, alleys, working chutes, etc. I own a bale feeder, working tub, and alley. I've had no problems with the equipment and I expect none because everything is made strong enough to stand up."

Pete Williams, Decatur, Ill.: A 1991 International 4800 28-ft. field cultivator equipped with mechanical depth control is Pete's "best buy". "The wings and main frame have separate depth control systems so the main frame can be set slightly deeper to remove tire marks. It's easy to set the depth control and keep it level. It stays where you set it all day long."

On the negative side, "My 1990 Deere 960 26-ft. tine cultivator equipped with single point depth control and cross-flow hydraulics is a worst buy. The problem is that the single point depth control spring shuts off at different depths. When I turn at the end of the field with the cultivator in the ground, the cross-flow hydraulics force oil from the main frame to the wings causing the lift wing to come out of the ground. Tines break frequently. Two of my neighbors with 25-ft. and 36-ft. models have had the same problems. The company has shown no inclination to solve the problems with a new design."

Ray Roberts, Hillsboro, Ohio: "Our worst buy is the 454 cu. in. GM truck engine on our 1982 motor coach. It has plenty of power but uses too much gasoline. The worst part is that we had to install new exhaust headers on it, one for each side, at 20,000 and 25,000 miles. The company wouldn't pay for the expense. They should put stainless steel headers on it. I've talked with other owners of this motorcoach and about 75% who had 40,000 or more miles on their vehicles installed new headers. I

the first time the machine was used."

Randy Dvorak, Bagley, Iowa: "My best buy is my 1990 Herd electric seeder, model GT-77, mounted on my ATV 4-wheeler. It really speeds up grass seeding. However, the calibration instructions leave much to be desired."

"My 1981 Versatile 150 tractor is also a best buy. I've put on over 400 hours per year with few problems. The hydrostatic drive, good visibility, and bidirectional features make this truly a 'versatile' machine."

Ralph Beckwith, Midland, S. Dak.: "I've owned my New Holland TR Rotor combine for 21 years and put 1,000 to 2,500 hours per year on it. I've used it to harvest wheat, oats, milo, buckwheat, millet and alfalfa. It still does good work."

W.W. Wills, Oklahoma City, Okla.: "My 1990 Honda Civic four-door car equipped with automatic transmission and air conditioning is a best buy. It's very nimble in city driving and easy to maneuver. The only expense has been for a couple of oil changes. It uses no oil and gets 28 to 29 mpg in traffic. It got 42 mpg on one 300-mile round trip on the highway at 55 mph."

Ralph Arnold, Keosauqua, Iowa: Ralph's had good luck with his 1990 Ariens model 927 riding lawn mower. "It's easy to handle and very efficient. Last spring our grass grew like gangbusters and the machine had already completed a year's work by June 1. The only problem was a broken battery hold-down strap. The dealer replaced it."