

# Best & Worst Buys

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carry 1,500 lbs. or eight square bales of hay and dumps hydraulically. The 8.5 hp electric start Kawasaki engine starts in temperatures down to 30 degrees below zero. I can go in places that I could never go with a tractor. Since purchasing it I've cut down on the use of my tractor by at least 40%. No problems at all."

**Wayne Barricklow, Waverly, Kan.:** "It does a nice job of mowing and is easy to handle and maneuver. No problems," says Wayne, happy with his "best buy" 1990 Ford XL16 lawn and garden tractor. It's equipped with a 16-hp 2-cylinder engine and hydrostatic transmission.

**Bob Jessup, Winter Park, Fla.:** Bob says Pennzoil 10-40 motor oil is a "best buy". "The day I bought my 1985 Ford F-150 pickup I dumped the oil out of the engine and put in Pennzoil 10-40. I changed the oil and filter every 3,000 miles after that. It was never in the shop and when I sold it, it had 140,000 miles."

He isn't pleased with Ford batteries. "I've always been well satisfied with the Ford pickups I've owned, but why do they have such poor batteries? The batteries in my newest two pickups lasted 13 and 14 months. Even with a warranty adjustment it would have cost \$40 to replace them with new Ford batteries. I bought Walmart batteries that had a 60-month warranty for \$38."

**Michael Harper, Greenwood, Mo.:** Michael's had problems with the ATS turbocharger kit installed by a dealer on his 6.9-liter Ford diesel engine. "After about 15,000 miles a rubber expandable freeze plug that was part of the kit disintegrated and destroyed the engine. The company had sent out a recall but we never received it. After 1 1/2 years of battling with lawyers they finally settled out of court at the last minute. The lawyers got the money and I got a patched-up engine. The company is very difficult to deal with."

**John Miller, Howard City, Mich.:** John says his M & W model 1815 rotary hoe is a "best buy". "It does a beautiful job on small weeds in crusty ground and the 3-pt. hookup

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is the best I've ever seen. All 3-pt. hookups should be built this way.

"My 8-in. dia., 51-ft. long Westfield grain auger is a best buy. Works great.

"My Case-IH 5100 grain drill is a pleasure to own. I like the large seed capacity.

"My worst buy of all time is a Generac standby generator. It never worked and neither the factory nor the distributor would help."

**Ralph N. Smith, Mayport, Penn.:** Ralph isn't happy with white Onduline roofing sheets that he installed on the roof of his house, milkhouse, and silo. "The paint is peeling off leaving the old black material showing through. It looks very bad. The company has refused to do anything about the problem even though the roofing has a lifetime guarantee."

**Les Kalkwarf, Aurora, Neb.:** "My 1977 International 886 is the best tractor I've ever owned. It handles like a car and the cab is as quiet and comfortable as the cab on a pickup. It's very economical on fuel and has never been in a shop for repairs. We never have to add oil between oil changes."

**George Vonderheide, Elgin, Ill.:** George's uses his 1990 Honda 11 hp, 3,000 psi portable water blaster to custom clean swimming pools and says it's a "best buy". "It's quiet, always starts, and has plenty of power. We've cleaned about 75 swimming pools and it's been absolutely trouble-free."

His "worst buy" is his 1989 Plymouth Sundance 4-door car equipped with a 2.2-liter engine. "I've changed the oil regularly, but the engine is starting to get noisy after only 25,000 miles and it gets only 16 to 22 mpg. The dealer can't solve the problem. Also, the body is poor and the manifold vacuum lines keep melting."

**Timothy Jaskinia, Floresville, Texas:** Timothy likes his 1990 Chevrolet 1-ton extended cab 4-WD Silverado Fleetside pickup. "It's equipped with a fuel-injected 454 cu. in. engine, a 3-speed automatic transmission, and limited slip axles that have a 3.73 gear ratio. It gets 14 mpg, has an excellent ride and looks good, too. I really hate to use it on the farm, but that's what I bought it for!"

**Nolan Verwest, Finley, N. Dak.:** Nolan's "best buy" is his 30-ft. MacDon combine header. "It makes combining much easier and faster.

"My Case-IH 7120 tractor is a good running tractor with lots of power."

**Eric Angus, LaSalle, Colo.:** A 1990 Valley model 6000 center pivot irrigation system is Eric's "best buy". "It's never caused a minute's trouble and goes through mud better than any other center pivot I've seen. I just push the button and it keeps running.

"My worst buy is my 1990 22-ft. Sund bean pickup. The bearings wore out after the first 100 acres. The problem is that the cam tracks aren't straight which causes the bearing holders to run against the cam track and wear out. The problem still hasn't been corrected although I'm told that the company plans to offer an update kit."

**Robert Eaton, Port Williams, Nova Scotia:** "My 1989 Kubota 8950 4-WD tractor is a best buy. It has a good range of transmission speeds that are well suited to the work we do on our 250-acre fruit and vegetable farm. The cab is comfortable and has great visibility. Always starts even in the coldest weather."

**Glen Hassebroek, Crocfoot, S. Dak.:** Glen is the owner of a 1991 Dodge W-250 4-WD pickup equipped with a Cummins turbocharged engine. "It has plenty of power to pull trailers and gets 18 to 22 mpg. I wish it rode better empty, but it rides good with the trailer on."

**Frank Grosvenor, New Vienna, Ohio:** "It starts easy, is easy on gas, and has plenty of power," says Frank about his "best buy" 1990 Sears Craftsman 12 hp riding lawn mower.

**Roger Sobota, Arcadia, Wis.:** "This is the best baler we've ever owned," says Roger, happy with his 1990 Deere 335 round baler. "It's simple to operate and

maintain. Thanks to the double twine wrap, we can make and wrap a bale every two minutes in good windrows."

**Russell Buhler, Dalmeny, Canada:** A 1986 Bobcat 743 skidsteer loader with 3,000 hours rates as Russell's "best buy". "We use it every day on our dairy farm to feed cattle and clean barn. The only things we've had to fix are the starter and battery. I wouldn't hesitate to buy another one."

On the negative side, "My Surge computer feeder is a worst buy. The cows can bang feed down. The dealer has no parts on stock and doesn't know how to service it."

**Neil Wirkler, Luana, Iowa:** "It makes the fluffiest, fastest drying windrows I've ever seen," says Neil about his "best buy" Deutz-Allis KS 150 hay rake. "It doesn't rope the hay together like my old parallel bar rake did.

"My PAX bulk bin (PAX Mfg., Coldwater, Ohio) is also a best buy. It's extremely wether tight and ground feed is augered out of it without bridging or sticking. It was delivered with easy-to-follow instructions for setup and no shortage of bolts."

**Garr Wayment, Burley, Idaho:** "My Case-IH 7130 4-WD tractor performs well and is economical. We have an excellent local dealer who performs all updates promptly."

**David Livesay, Porter, Okla.:** "My Westfield drill fill works like it's supposed to and is a great labor saver. I wouldn't do without it if it cost twice what I paid.

"My 1983 Deere 2750 tractor is a pleasure to drive, but the first 1,800 hours were very expensive. I had to spend about \$1,800 on repairs. There were a lot of electrical problems that took the company several

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years to correct. The crankcase filled with water. We thought that the problem was a head gasket so we pulled the head in our shop and found a hole in one sleeve. The tractor was built during the strike at Deere. We never did get any help from the company. One block man even told me that we shouldn't have pulled the head ourselves. It shouldn't have made any difference because the problem was with the factory work, not ours. We've put another 1,800 hours on the tractor with no problems."

**Frank J. Steinkamp, Mount Vernon, Ind.:** "This is the worst chain saw I've ever owned," reports Frank, unhappy with his 1989 Husquarna 45. "The muffler came loose and banged against the cast aluminum block. The flakes that fell from the block ruined the piston. The company says that according to the manual the muffler should be tightened regularly, but my manual doesn't say that. The company wouldn't do anything about it. The dealer sold me some parts at cost and I repaired the saw myself."

**Earl Piell, Myerstown, Penn.:** Earl bought a new Patz barn cleaner and liquid manure pump in June, 1990, and says it's a "best buy". "The pump in the sump at the bottom of the gutter pumps liquid manure through a pvc pipe and into our manure spreader, allowing solid manure to go up the chute much faster. No problems."

**Jerry Ross, Washington, Mich.:** Jerry's had bad luck with his 1988 Ford F-150 pickup. "Both exhaust manifolds cracked

and cost \$100 to repair. Other repairs were required on two pistons, one rod bearing, a valve that had to be ground, and two exhaust valves that cost \$160. Luckily it was still under warranty at 31,000 miles. The pickup is equipped with a manual 5-speed transmission with overdrive. First and reverse gears are geared way too high. The company admits there's a problem, but even its newer model pickups are built the same way. If it wasn't for the low transfer gear the clutch would have failed long ago. It stalls easily in high range when I'm taking off. It also gets poor mileage."

**Tony Moules, Watsonville, Calif.:** Tony says his 1990 Rhino mower "does a good job on fine-stemmed grass and weeds. But it doesn't do as good a job in heavy grass."

**Leon Wasielewski, Waterford, Penn.:** Leon's disappointed with his 1988 Ford F-250 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6-cylinder engine and standard transmission. "Fuel economy is excellent at 20 to 22 mpg, but it has a terrible paint job. Paint chipped off in big 1/2 to 3-in. strips and now it's all rusty. We took it back to the dealer two months after we bought it, but they wouldn't do anything to solve the problem which they said was caused by rocks flying up off the road. But paint is chipped even on the roof and inside the bed."

**Marvin Kanagy, Guthrie, Ky.:** Marvin's pleased with his 1990 White 100 tractor. "It has 500 trouble-free hours except for some adjustments that had to be made to the fuel pump. It's a very well built tractor with plenty of power and traction."

**Marville Sheard, Athena, Ore.:** "My best buy of all time is my 1971 Chevrolet 1/2-ton 2-WD pickup equipped with a limited slip rear end. It has 418,000 miles. I overhauled the engine at 168,000 miles and it still runs good and uses little oil. It still has the original standard crankshaft. I've replaced three sets of ball joints and four sets of drag links and tie rod ends. It still gets about 16 mpg around the ranch. I attribute the long life to changing the oil and filter every 2,500 to 3,000 miles."

**James Eads, Jonesville, N.C.:** "It produces excellent bales and the bale wrap does an excellent job of shedding water resulting in little loss of hay," says James about his "best buy" 1990 Deere 435 round baler.

"My 1990 Ariens 8 hp riding mower is a worst buy. It has a 30-in. cut. It won't run properly and is always out of adjustment."

**Dennis Rahn, Deerfield, Wis.:** Dennis is the satisfied owner of a 1984 Ford F-150 pickup equipped with a 300 cu. in. 6-cylinder engine. "It has 216,000 miles and has required very little maintenance. Doesn't burn oil. I've replaced only one alternator and one starter."

**Brent Maust, Bay Port, Mich.:** A 1984 Deere 4450 tractor rates as Brent's "best buy". "The 15-speed transmission is convenient and trouble-free. It has good fuel economy and can do everything from cultivating to hard work such as plowing."

**Jeff Meyer, Saint Olaf, Iowa:** "It starts well, is easy on fuel, and has plenty of power for its size," says Jeff, pleased with his "best buy" 1978 International 886 tractor.

"My International 666 has also been a good tractor. Only one repair in six years."

Jeff says his 1990 1818 Case skid steer loader is neither a best nor worst buy. "It runs well and does a good job, but shortly after I bought it the gas tank started to leak. It's mounted in the frame and was poorly welded at the factory. The dealer rewelded it and repainted it."