

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

Reg Schmidt, Thorsby, Alberta: He's disappointed with his 1990 Gehl CB1260 forage harvester. "During the first hours of operation the header auger broke away from its drive shaft. When we removed it we found it was only partially welded. Also the auger was made of very light material compared to other forage harvesters. After a few days of use the pickup bands began breaking off. They were poorly designed and made out of thin material. As the season wore on I had various problems with the Auto Max system and the header drives. I had previously owned a New Holland 900 which performed well. I thought I was moving up to a bigger, better machine. Instead I paid a premium price for a big headache."

Reg's "best buy" is his 1989 Gehl SL 3310 skid steer loader. "It's very agile and powerful for its size and is well designed and well built. I especially like the 'T' bar controls and the flip-up canopy which makes it easy to service."

Larry Paul, Shickley, Neb.: Larry says **Beacon** herbicide is his "best buy". "From time to time a product appears that opens new vistas to the user. This is such a product. Corn growers now have an alternative to rotation for shattercane control."

been sued for its transmissions, though.

My Black & Decker deluxe cordless screwdriver is a worst buy. This has to be the most useless tool ever made. It doesn't have enough power to drive even the smallest screws into soft wood. The batteries last long enough to drive only two or three small screws, then require an hour for recharging. I replaced it with a **Makita** model. Absolutely no comparison."

Richard Cain, Belle Mead, N.J.: "My 1989 Chevrolet pickup equipped with a 350 cu. in. engine and 5-speed transmission is a best buy. It has plenty of power to pull my 16-ft. trailer. It has good fuel economy, much better than the 1986 Ford 6-cylinder pickup I traded in."

Randy Ratliff, Live Oak, Fla.: "My 1989 Deere 430 round baler is a best buy. It makes good uniform bales that stand up well. Converging wheels are worth the extra cost. The only thing I don't like is that it takes a long time to tie the bale."

Scott Banik, Humble, Texas: Scott's had good luck with his 1991 Chevrolet C350 Silverado pickup equipped with a 454 cu. in. engine, 4-speed transmission, and 4:10 rear end. "It gets 16 mpg running empty and 10 mpg towing a trailer loaded with 200 bales of hay weighing 16,800 lbs. It's a pleasure to drive, runs excellent, and starts well in cold weather. Chevrolet makes a good quality product."

Leander N. Goodwin, Zionsville, Ind.: A 1986 Deere 314 riding lawn mower heads Leander's "worst buy" list. "A bolt broke off on the hydrostatic transmission before the warranty had expired. It was replaced but broke again. Finally after four bolts were replaced, we welded on a new part which solved the problem. The engine won't start in cold weather and leaks oil. I have to add one pint of oil every time I use it. It steers very hard. I removed the spindles and sanded them and honed the holes, but it didn't solve the problem."

"I'm also unhappy with my 1986 DMI wagon. It steered so hard that I had to use the tractor to turn the front wheels. I removed the front spindles and found some washers missing. I sanded the spindles and honed the holes. Now I can turn them by hand, but barely."

"My **Dixon** lawn mower starts instantly and is easy to handle. It does a good job."

Kermit Holland, McKenzie, Tenn.: Kermit says his 1987 47 hp Agri Power tractor is "a real workhorse. It's powerful, rugged, economical, and doesn't have a lot of unnecessary gadgets. No major problems."

Glen Peterson, Marshfield, Wis.: Glen's the happy owner of a 1989 Ford 7710 4-WD tractor. "It was reasonably priced compared to other brands. I'm very pleased with its power, maneuverability, and ease of handling. Most service points are very accessible."

Roger Jackson, Jackson, Mich.: Roger bought a double rake hitch built by **E. Steiner** (1202 Dalton Foxlake Road, Dalton, Ohio, 44618 ph 216 828-2453) that appeared in FARM SHOW (Vol. 12, No. 6) and says he's well pleased with it. "It has cut my raking time in half with no breakdowns or repairs. It's well built and reasonably priced."

Roger D. Brown, Pontiac, Ill.: "My 1988 Chevrolet 1500 4-WD Suburban is a gutsy vehicle and a best buy. I previously owned a 1980 Suburban that I traded in last fall. It had 114,000 miles, many of them spent pulling 500 bu. loads of corn and soybeans. Very few repairs."

Rick Fiechter, Montpelier, Indiana: "My best buy is a drainage tile plow manufactured by **Don Wurdinger** of Waverly, Iowa. I purchased the plow because I thought it was economical and might fit into my operation. After equipping it with a laser and automatic controls, I found it worked better than I had expected. I used it to install about 130,000 ft. of tile in six months."

Raymond Ward, Prince Albert, Sask.: Raymond's happy with his 1988 **Kubota** L28504-WD tractor. "It's got 1,000 trouble-free hours and I've used it with a snowblower, roto tiller, flail mower, and 5-ft. rear-mounted blade. I cut four acres of grass and a half mile of roadside per week during summer. This tractor burns less fuel than the **Yanmar** 155 model it replaced, but has twice as much power. Starts good even at 40 below zero. It's so easy to operate that my wife and children can drive it, too."

"My 1984 **GMC** 1500 1/2-ton pickup equipped with a 6.2 liter diesel engine and automatic overdrive transmission was neither a best or worst buy. However, the transmission was a joke. At 20,000 miles the dealer replaced it with a new one and again at 50,000 miles, both under warranty. At 65,000 miles, with the warranty expired, the transmission failed again and would have cost \$2,400 to repair. I replaced it with a new Turbo 400 transmission which solved the problem. It cost me \$600. At 185,000 miles I sold the pickup. The engine had never been touched and the body was still in good condition. General Motors should have