

Best & Worst Buys

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heads are easy to switch back and forth. However, the pickup belts aren't well suited for barley swaths. The belts should have more teeth and they should be made from metal and bent slightly to do a better job on smaller barley swaths."

Orel Sands, Keldron, S. Dak.: Orel likes his 1989 Chevrolet Celebrity automobile equipped with a touring classic package. "It gets 28 mpg at road speeds of 60 to 70 mph."

Bruce Colvin, Camarillo, Calif.: Bruce's "worst buy" is a Makita cordless 2-speed reversible driver-drill, model 6012HD, which he uses around the home for light-duty drilling in wood, aluminum, and sheet metal. "After less than 100 hours of use the brushes split and began to disintegrate, causing the motor to fail. Since the motor is an integral unit with non-replaceable brushes, I had to buy a complete new motor assembly for \$30."

"My Makita reciprocating variable speed saw, model JR3000V, is another worst buy. It doesn't have external brush replacement ports either so I anticipate another large expenditure when it fails."

Gerald Stuckey, Martinton, Ill.: "My best buy is my 1977 Oldsmobile. It has 225,000 miles but the engine has never been worked on and the car still has its original greaseless U-joints. The transmission was rebuilt at 207,000 miles."

Enos Burkholder, Fleetwood, Penn.: Enos nominates a Skil 4 1/2-in. disc grinder as his "best buy". "It's lightweight, well balanced, easy to use, and has plenty of power."

Todd Bode, Courtland, Minn.: "We paid \$5,000 for the mower and have already spent about \$700 on parts," says Todd, unhappy owner of a 1987 Schweiss "zero turn" lawn mower. "This is a dangerous machine. The joystick broke and locked, causing the mower to go into a spin while I was on a hillside, throwing me off and into a telephone pole. I had to replace all of the tires the first year because they were poor quality. I also replaced the solenoid twice, as well as the electric lift switch, the blade on-off switch, the electric clutch for the blades, and the shaft from the motor and bearing that runs the blades. All of the electric parts are Japanese-made. Schweiss Mfg. is supposed to have a one-year warranty, but after lots of arguing and fighting on the phone I got one new solenoid out of them. I advise anyone buying a new mower to go with a name brand company such as Deere or Toro so the factory will stand behind it."

"Another worst buy is my 1989 Ford F-150 pickup. The 4-speed transmission went out at 900 miles and again at 1,800 miles. Other than that it's a nice riding, comfortable pickup."

Bill Short, Hamilton, Mo.: Bill's happy with his Miller Bobcat generator welder. "The Onan engine provides 8,000 watts of 60 hertz AC power - a winner especially during power outages - as well as 225 amps of DC plus, DC minus, and AC power."

William Webster, Paris, Ill.: "I read an article in FARM SHOW (Vol. 13, No. 3) about the Strauss clipper mower (Strauss Mfg. Co., Rt. 2, McKune, Kan. 66753 (ph 316632-4401). I bought one and it's neither

a best or worst buy. It works fine but has two problems. It needs a balance wheel on the sickle-drive to help keep the drive belt steady, and the hitch clevis should be changed because nearly half of the mower's weight rests on it, causing it to bend and wear rapidly."

Stephen Esposito, Newton, N.J.: Stephen's "best buy" is his 1983 Volkswagen diesel pickup. "It gets 50 mpg and has outlasted two Chevrolet C-10 pickups."

"My 1988 New Holland 479 Haybine floats right over rocks."

On the negative side, "My 'Field Fresh' propionic acid hay preservative application system from Agway is poorly designed. The spray nozzles in front of the finger feed on the baler don't spray the hay thoroughly, resulting in moldy hay and high curing temperatures. Also the acid aroma causes breathing problems and teary eyes for kids loading hay in the barn. There's no factory backup. The best part of the entire kit is the moisture probe."

William Hoffpauir, Gueydan, La.: Warren's happy with his 1986 Bush Hog RD-20 rotary ditcher. "We rotate rice with 1,000 acres of soybeans so we need a lot of ditches and have to tear down a lot of levees. The RD-20 makes ditches deep and fast and goes right through levees in one pass."

On the negative side, "My International 4500 27 1/2-ft. wide Vibrashank is pure junk. It never has worked at a uniform depth. The wings either dig too deep or not deep enough. My dealer has been of no help."

Jeff Harder, Walnut, Iowa: Jeff likes his International 4500 23 1/2-ft. field cul-

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tivator. "It pulls easy and does a good job of incorporating and taking out weeds when we use it to make a final pass before planting. However, I'm disappointed with the trash clearance."

V. Brandon, New Kirk, Okla.: "My 1986 Ford F-350 diesel 6.9-liter pickup is a worst buy. It's had a new heater core, front end, engine, water pump, injector pump, throw-out bearing and clutch changeover kit, and new clutches in the limited slip differential. At 10,000 miles it was using a quart of oil every 500 miles. The company reworked the heads to solve the problem. At 25,000 miles the oil cooler leaked antifreeze and ruined the engine which was replaced. The new engine had less than 25,000 miles on it when its rocker arms had to be replaced. Oil tests show the new engine wears three times as fast as the original engine. Ford and the local dealer have tried to repair everything, but for a pickup that's well cared for it's quite a disappointment. The \$1,000 I spent on a 5-year unlimited mileage warranty was money well spent."

Virgil Brandon, Newkirk, Okla.: "It

pulls easy, has little or no side draft, and costs less than any comparable good used plow," says Virgil, pleased with his Blanchat flex plow (P.O. Box 444, Harper, Kan. 67058). "It also has a very short turning radius in either direction."

Neal McLeary, Elkton, Md.: "My Kuhn 16-ft. wide pto-driven hay tedder is a best buy. It teds wet hay, spreads hay out between swaths, and folds easily for transport."

Gary Barnard, Beatrice, Neb.: "My White 8700 combine is complete junk. The engine's main seal went out before we even got the combine to the field, and by the end of the first year every belt had failed. It constantly heats up and plugs no matter what the conditions."

Gary says his "best buy" is his Ford TW30 tractor. "It has the longest torque curve of any tractor I've ever owned."

Roy Fishburn, Portage, Ind.: "Installed a Fish carburetor on our motorhome and it runs great, but instead of improving the fuel economy I actually lost 1 mpg."

Mark Herrold, Kewanna, Ind.: "My 1987 Deere 450 Hydra Push manure spreader is a best buy. There's no web to freeze or break, and it's tight enough to haul liquid or solids."

On the negative side, "My Case-IH 496 25-ft. disk is a worst buy because the rock cushion springs break frequently."

Paul Nutting, Archie, Mo.: Paul is pleased with his Ford 6700 tractor. "Service instructions on maintenance of the injector pump on the 6700 model vs. the 7700 model were in conflict. After pointing this out to a district manager, Ford replaced my injector pump, a \$1,100 value, at no charge."

Ralph Hutto, Swansea, S.C.: Ralph's disappointed with his 1986 Ford Ranger 4-WD pickup equipped with a 2.9-liter V-6 fuel-injected engine. He bought it with a 60,000 mile 4-year extended warranty. "It had dirty fuel injectors, a blown gasket, fuel pump in tank replaced, lifter replaced. At 20,000 miles all tires on the ground separated. At 28,000 miles the battery acted like it was dead so I purchased a new Sears DieHard battery with 675 cold starting amps. It works fine even though the alternator still doesn't charge right."

Wilbur Smith, Erie, Mich.: Wilbur's "best buy" is the Duo-Rate seed changer he installed on his Deere 7000 Max-Emerge planter. "It's worked well for seven years."

Wilbert Kadolph, Pinckneyville, Ill.: "My Deere 950 diesel tractor equipped with power steering and a 6-ft. belly mower is a best buy. It reduces mowing time and rides much smoother than a riding lawn mower."

Paul Brown, Blairsville, Ga.: Paul is the satisfied owner of a 1986 Kubota 2850 tractor and front-end loader. "I haven't had any trouble with it at all. The 4-WD is fantastic."

He also likes his 1984 Ford F-250 diesel pickup. "It has 76,000 miles and all I've done is change the oil and filters and install new tires."

T.R. Silverman, Crewe, Va.: He nominates his Woods 3-pt. backhoe as his "worst buy". "The hydraulic check valve won't hold. When removed from the tractor it should stand on stabilizer feet but it won't because hydraulic fluid bleeds away. When installed on tractor we have to use straps to hold the stabilizer feet up or they'll slip down and drag on the ground. Our dealer replaced the valve once but the condition was worse than before."

Silverman likes his Kubota L2250 tractor equipped with a BF 400 loader. "It's a

super value for a small tractor. It cranks the first time, every time, even in freezing weather. I use it almost daily with our Woods backhoe to install drip irrigation."

D.J. Davidson, Centerburg, Ohio: A 1989 Ford F-250 pickup equipped with automatic transmission and a 4:10 rear end is D.J.'s "worst buy". "The first month I owned it a grease cap constantly fell off inside one of the front wheel covers. I finally removed it. At 10,000 miles both rear wheel seals began leaking. They're only \$4.50 at a parts house, but because the truck is a 1989 model the seals weren't stocked yet so I had to pay a Ford dealer \$26 apiece. The 6-cyl. fuel-injected engine runs rough and gets only 12 mpg. Most V-8 engines get better mileage than that. The headlights were adjusted so high at the factory that the birds in my area wore sunglasses at night so I wouldn't blind them."

Bruce Walls, Kingston, Mich.: Bruce nominates a 1989 Micro-Trak 3000 sprayer

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controller as his "best buy". "It maintains a constant rate of application whether I speed up or slow down. It's far better than trying to use the throttle to maintain a certain speed."

George Holmes, Trumansburg, N.Y.: "I'll never go back to a sickle mower again," says George, happy owner of a 1988 New Holland 411 discbine. "I've used it to cut over 400 acres of all kinds of hay at 7 mph. All I've spent is \$20 for knife replacement."

Charles Riddle, Argos, Ind.: "It's a lot cheaper than a grain leg," says Charles, pleased owner of a Hutchinson 8-in. dia. grain pump. "It handles more grain than a 10-in. auger and requires a much smaller electric motor."

Charles' "worst buy" is a Hutchinson gearbox reducer drive designed for an auger in the bottom of his unloading pit. "When we bolted the gearbox on the brackets that mount on the auger tube, none of the holes lined up so we had to redrill them. Once we got it together it worked perfect and was worth the money."

Danford Wheelock, Frankfort, N.Y.: "My 1989 Hesston 16-ft. swing-arm mower is a worst buy. The engineers should have tried to mow hay with it."

Fred Dunlop, Stayner, Ontario: "My best buy is a 1989 Horst 19-ft. add-on hopper for my Westeel grain bin (Agrecon Marketing, Inc., Maple Grove Road, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada N3H 4R6 ph 519 653-7712). It unloads by gravity to eliminate shoveling."

Douglas Daniel, South Lyon, Mich.: "My Kubota B-7100 4-WD tractor does everything I expected and more."

On the negative side, "My Honda 110-volt gas-powered generator breaks down constantly and is a worst buy. In two years the repair costs have exceeded the cost of the machine."

L.E. Morrow, Covington, Ohio: "My 1988 Ritchie Water-Pro energy-free cattle waterer is a best buy. The covers push down easier than the big ball covers on the competition."