

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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Dale Stevens, Skaneateles, N.Y.: Dale is the unhappy owner of a 1984 **International** 6388 2 plus 2 tractor. "The pto assembly broke four times in four years and had to be replaced each time. The company tried blaming the problem on our implements, but it was foolish on their behalf because a 130 hp tractor should handle a 200 bu. spreader or a 2-row chopper. If it can't, there's something wrong. Our dealer tried hard to help us out. Finally Case-IH sent out a factory rep who found that a factory defect in a casing had caused the problem. Now I hope Case-IH has the courtesy to return the thousands of dollars that we needlessly spent."

Jake Jacobs, Parkside, Sask.: Jake's disappointed with his **Deere** 4450 tractor. "It was a demonstrator with 140 hours when I bought it in June of 1986. Problems developed in September of 1988, just two months after the warranty expired. Meanwhile, my dealer went out of business. I took the tractor to another dealer who was of no help whatsoever. He told me all the gears had to be replaced because I'd been shifting in the range on-the-go. I know I don't do that, and I'm the only driver. I expected a big company like Deere to pay for some of my expenses, so I wrote them. They told me

opens for weeds, but not for rocks which have caused up to \$8,500 in damage to the rotor."

Wayne Bancroft, Markdale, Ont.: "My 1988 **Forage King** hay basket allows one man to handle bales from field to barn. It fills automatically with bales from a conventional square baler and unloads all at once by opening the rear gate."

Frank Wolcott, Bozeman, Mont.: Frank is impressed with his **Schnider** grain planting forecast scaler (H.G. Schnider Co., P.O. Box 16, Hugo, Minn. 55038). "It tells me how many pounds per acre my drill is seeding by checking the first 165 ft. of row seeded. I remove the plate from the shoe and replace it with a plastic sack which I tie on with a rubber band. A chart tells you the number of feet to measure in the row depending on row spacing. I plant on 7 in. rows so I run the drill 165 ft. Then I pour seed collected in the sack onto a scale."

Pioneer Equipment, Hugoton, Kan.: "Our 1988 **Hesston** 8400 swather equipped with a 16-ft. header is a best buy. We made three cuttings at 6 to 7 mph in irrigated hay and it never plugged up. Dirt removal is as simple as removing the bottom center plate on the header."

Donald White, Smithfield, Ill.: "It's got plenty of power and is relatively trouble-free," says Donald, whose **International** 986 tractor has nevertheless had some problems. "I love the cab, but the shifting lever causes problems because you have to lock it down in park. When you dismount, the lever either catches your pants leg or it outright trips you. I don't think the fool who designed that part of the cab ever even sat in the finished product, let alone drove it."

Donald isn't impressed with his **Kewanee** 16-ft. wing disk, either. "It was a total piece of junk. I used it for about 20 minutes before I got rid of it. It was determined to bury itself on each corner, but the middle barely touched the ground despite any adjustments I made. I practically gave it away when I traded for an **International** 480 disk. It's a real peach. It's built heavy and does a fine job of leveling."

Chuck Flaming, Paxton, Neb.: Chuck has used two different automatic guidance systems on his cultivator. "The first system was the **Orthman** Trakker 86. It had many electronic problems. We constantly had to recenter the rear cylinder, and switching it to different implements was a big hassle. We traded it for two **Acura** Trak guidance systems and we can't say enough good things about them. We can let anyone cultivate corn without worrying about them ruining the corn stand. Also, the driver isn't a nervous wreck after a long day in the field."

Loudon Reel, Alleyton, Texas: Loudon says his **Echo** chain saw has enough power to cut pecan, oak, and mesquite up to 10 in. in dia. and is a "best buy". "It starts quick and easy. I simply pull out the choke, pull the starter rope until the saw fires up, and push in the choke. Starts on three pulls every time without fail, whether it's 30° or 90°. I like that."

Loudon's worst buy of all time is his **Ford** mower. "The blades were nothing more than strips of 10-ga. 1/8-in. sheet metal sharpened on one side, with hardly any lift at all. The ends were turned upward after three hours of mowing, causing grass buildup under the deck. Other problems included two bent shaft assemblies on the mowing deck, three flat tires, a new belt for the mowing deck, a difficult belt adjustment system, a hard-to-shift transmission, a new

they'd investigate. I wrote them again, but they never even answered my letter. My opinion of Deere and Co. has dropped to zero."

James Britt, South Fulton, Tenn.: "It'll plant in anything," says James, whose 1984 **Kinze** 6-row, double-frame corn planter (9-row soybean planter) has nevertheless had some problems. "It eats bearings. We put in 12 to 15 bearings one year, and before we could start planting the next season we had to replace several more. I now try to keep 5 or 6 bearings on hand at all times."

James's "best buy" is his 1971 **Deere** 4620 tractor. "It handles like an overgrown 4020. I purchased it used in 1987 for \$5,000 with 4,300 hours. It was faded and filthy but mechanically sound. It now has 4,900 hours and I've spent less than \$1,000 on repairs. I wouldn't sell it for double the money."

T.A. Marchant, Orillia, Ont.: "What a piece of junk!", says Marchant about his 1981 **Belarus** 250 tractor. "It wouldn't start in cold weather and only worked half the time. Parts either were unavailable or damaged in shipping. I got rid of it after two years."

Lorne Hanson, Torquay, Sask.: "The rotor could use more power, and it could have larger tires, heavier rims, and improved controls," says Lorne about his 1981 **New Holland** TR 85 combine. "It does an excellent job of threshing with little grain loss or cracked wheat. I like the grain tank monitor because it tells me when the hopper is full. However, the rock door is poor. It

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