

# Best & Worst Buys

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ciency, drives well and rides good."

"My 96-ft. **Brandt** field sprayer is another best buy. It rides sturdy and stable even on hills and over ruts. The wind cones help reduce spray drift."

**Howard Bragg III, Arlington, Tenn.:** Howard's "best buy" is his 1982 **Deere 235** 19-ft. disk. "It cuts level, is durable and easy to service."

Another best buy" is his **Deere 4420** combine equipped with a 13-ft. wide 220 flex header. "It saves grain and is easy to service."

On the negative side, "A **Zenith** replacement carburetor that I bought for my **Massey Ferguson 65** tractor is a worst buy. It had bad floater valve problems so I returned it and got a replacement. That one was almost impossible to adjust so it doesn't flood, too."

**Corwin Whitworth, Inkom, Idaho:** Corwin says his "worst buy" is his 1985 **Versatile 956** tractor. "I've broken six differential axle housings so far, as well as the main frame. The flex coupling went out, the hinge pins and steering rams had to be replaced. Ford-New Holland says I'm the only one with these problems."

**Lloyd Martens, Chadron, Neb.:** Lloyd is unhappy with his 1987 **Deere 3830** windrower. "This machine wasn't engineered to make a decent windrow. We cut about 200 acres before giving up on it. Flanges on the auger and rubber on the ends of the crimper rollers fell off. The dealer was very helpful, the company was not. They told the dealer they couldn't send a man out every time some farmer had a problem. For a \$48,000 machine they should do something. The header has been moved forward to make room for bigger tires, which causes hay to fall on the ground before it reaches the crimper."

On the positive side, "Our 1988 **Hesston 8400** 16-ft. windrower cuts hay as fast as anything we've tried. The cab is quiet and comfortable. The big diesel engine, combined with hydrostatic drive, makes for a very smooth running machine. We've cut about 900 acres so far without problems."

**Dean French, Troy Mills, Iowa:** Dean is disappointed with his 1988 **Dixon ZTR 40-in.** mower. "It broke down the second day I used it. I replaced the battery and a belt but it broke down again. It only has about 25 hours of running time."

**Carol Reafsnnyder, Colton, Ore.:** Carol's "best buy" is a **Little Giant** incubator with automatic turner. "It lets me hatch my own chicks, ducklings, and poults. I raise some for myself and also sell some. So far it has given a good hatch-out rate. They did short us four cups for the turner, though."

**E.S. Wells, Ralls, Texas:** He's pleased with his 1989 **Dodge** pickup equipped with a **Cummins** diesel engine. "It has all the power I need, good fuel economy and starts easily on cold mornings. Dodge could have done a little better job on the cab interior, though."

**Scott Miller, Elsie, Mich.:** "My 1982 **New Holland TR 85** combine does an excellent job of harvesting if I can keep it out of the shop. It's built too light for everyday use."

**Dean Kitley, Hardy, Iowa:** "It does everything the company said it would do,"

says Dean, pleased with his 1989 **Handlair 660** grain vac. "The company has treated us like kings. Very good service."

**T. Becker, Chestnut, Ill.:** "My **Remlinger** long-tooth harrow handles trash well, levels good, and breaks big clods."

**Ivan Zettle, Monroe, Wis.:** Ivan's "worst buy" is his **Cargill** pork production system. "Their specialists say research has proven that the Cargill way of raising hogs will result in 1.5 more pigs per litter. Well, somebody better inform the pigs about that. The isolets are nothing but sow slaughterhouses for the little pigs. The sows either step on them or lay on them. In one farrowing of 15 sows it's not unusual for the sow to kill 3 or 4 pigs per litter. Multiply that by 7 farrowings per year, and that's more dead pigs than we used to raise. The finishing floors are a joke, too. You can't keep bedding in the huts, even with a bedding board. If you crowd the pigs so they don't mess in the hut, they smother or prolapse their rectums. The only response from specialists to all our problems is 'check your management.' That's a cop-out on their part. We'd be farther ahead to bulldoze the whole works into a hole."

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**Alan McRae, Goodyear, Arizona:** "It offers unequalled pulling power, great fuel efficiency, and a comfortable cab," says Alan, happy owner of a 1989 **Case-IH 7120** Magnum front-wheel drive tractor. "With the 5,000 hour warranty this tractor can't be beat."

Alan's "worst buy" is his 1985 **Ford F-150** pickup. "It's a total piece of junk. I've never seen a piece of machinery with so many broken parts. I'll never try a Ford pickup again unless they dramatically change it."

**John Hohmann, Pataskala, Ohio:** John likes his **Gravely 2-wheel** garden tractor and rotary plow. "Raised bed gardening is ideal for our wet and cool spring weather, and the rotary plow makes raised beds in a single pass."

**Paul Clark, Huntington, Ind.:** "It has good power and averages 20 to 22 mpg," reports Paul, pleased with his 1988 **Dodge Dakota** pickup equipped with a V-6 engine and automatic transmission.

**Ken Dewey, Seward, Kan.:** Kenneth's "best buy" is his 1988 **Great Plains Solid Stand** double disc drill equipped with 7 1/2-in. row units that have individual depth control. "It does a great job of planting alfalfa. I got a beautiful stand in a dry summer the first time I used it. It goes through a lot of trash so it also does a nice job of planting wheat."

**Lawrence Caley, Bloomington, Wis.:** Lawrence is the pleased owner of a 1986 **Toyota 4 by 4** pickup. "The 4-cylinder engine gets good gas mileage and has lots of power. I filled my pickup box with 30 to 35 bu. of oats and pulled a 175 bu. gravity box at the same time."

Lawrence's "worst buy" is his 1987 **Stihl**

chain saw. "I tried using it to cut prickly ash in my pasture. As soon as I bore down on it, it died right out."

**Tom Albaugh, Ankeny, Iowa:** Tom's "best buy" is his 1988 **Deere 430** lawn mower. "I really like the horsepower delivered by the 3-cylinder diesel engine, and the radiator screen is easy to clean out. However, the deck could be 72 in. wide instead of 60 in."

Tom nominates a 1988 **Deere 4450** tractor as his "worst buy". "The cab is so small that I hit my head on the radio dial every time I get in or out. Everything inside the cab is jam-packed making it easy to spill things."

**Michael Miller, La Crescent, Minn.:** Michael's had good luck with his 1988 **Polaris 4-wheeler** ATV. "It has gone almost 1,000 miles without any trouble and has traveled logging roads where nothing but a log skidder or Caterpillar could go. I like the variable speed transmission equipped with high and low range."

**James Witter, Shippensburg, Penn.:** James has had trouble with his 1985 **Ford F-250** diesel pickup, particularly the brakes. "It's only got 47,000 miles but we've already installed four master cylinders and three sets of brake pads. We also had to replace a clutch."

**Richard Henning, Columbia, Mo.:** "It has good power and fuel economy, hauls a good load, and is comfortable to use," says Richard about his 1989 **Deere AMT 622**. He does have one complaint. "The rear wheel spacing is too narrow for 30-in. row crops so I can't use it for spraying. I'd like to see it modified for use in row crops."

**Richard Edgar, Deatsville, Ala.:** "It has operated trouble-free for three seasons and has done everything it was supposed to," says Richard, owner of a 1985 **International 782** Series II cotton picker. "Runs smoothly and has required only limited repairs and maintenance."

Richard's "worst buy" is a 1987 **Deere 6000 Hi-Cycle** sprayer equipped with a 60-ft. boom. "It was poorly painted at the factory. The dealer tried to touch up the paint but that left a haze on the glass. The bearings in the clutch housing went out after less than two years of use. The boom's hinge arms have broken on both sides - one while under warranty. It was replaced with a heavier, modified arm. Deere admits the hinge arm was weak, but they refuse to replace the other arm which subsequently broke just after the warranty expired. The overall machine, and in particular the 60-ft. boom, weren't built with field conditions in mind. Also, why doesn't Deere offer a hydrostatic drive?"

**Robert Hostetter, Ogdensburg, N.Y.:** "It's a fantastic purchase for any farmer," says Robert, who owns a 1989 **Polaris Big Boss 6-wheeler** ATV. "It has plenty of power, moves right along, and is very stable. The toolboxes are great."

On the "worst buy" side, Robert's unhappiness with his **Herdex** dairy cow herd health chart. "It's promoted as simple and easy to use. However, I found it very cumbersome to use with cows that don't have perfect heat cycles, and for marking pregnancies on the chart."

**Joe Schneider, Hay Springs, Neb.:** "We've used **Bar-Bait** rat and mouse killer for 5 years. It works great" (Salsbury Lab, Inc., Charles City, Iowa 50616-9989).

**Jack Turner, Elkhart, Kan.:** Jack likes his 8-in. **P & R** surge valve equipped with a solar panel which he uses on his flood irrigation system. "I bought my first one in

1987 and was so impressed that I've bought two more since then. The valve keeps water moving down the furrow so it can't soak in too deep. The solar panel makes the valve trouble-free."

**Bill Krynitsky, Shelton, Conn.:** "My **Massey Ferguson 1020 4-WD** tractor has far exceeded my expectations. The lower range of gears adds versatility and maneuverability in tough places and steep in-

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clines, allowing me to do many extra chores."

**Jim Dos, Waterloo, Iowa:** Jim's **International 5288** tractor heads his "best buy" list. "I can start it at temperatures down to 25° without using ether or plugging in the engine heater."

Jim's "worst buy" is a **New Idea Solids Plus II** manure spreader. "The 1,000 rpm drive caused constant trouble. I finally traded this model in for a conventional wet apron slope gate spreader."

**Myron Schafer, La Crosse, Ind.:** Myron's "worst buy" is his 1985 **Deere 429T** irrigation engine. "It had only 2,000 hours in the middle of the 1989 drought when a valve broke and froze to the top of a piston. We couldn't irrigate for two weeks because the engine was foreign-made and parts were unavailable. We also had trouble repairing an injector pump because of outdated and incorrect pump specifications. I thought Deere made better products."

**Dave Witkowski, Hamburg, N.Y.:** "My best buy is my 1984 **International 3088** tractor. It's the best shifting tractor IH has ever made and is easy on fuel. However, it could use a little more horsepower for its size. They should have turbocharged the 358 cu. in. engine."

On the negative side, "I had used my 1987 **Homelite 550** chain saw less than 5 hours when the motor blew up. It took the company more than 8 months to rebuild it. When I got it back I made less than two cuts with it and the automatic and manual oil pumps quit working, ruining the chain and bar. When the saw does run it has no power."

**Jack White, Sturgis, N.Y.:** A 1987 **Deutz-Allis 8070** tractor heads Jack's "best buy" list. "We've disked and plowed with it for two years with no problems. It's the best pulling tractor we own."

**Daniel Beard, Decorah, Iowa:** Daniel nominates his 1988 **Ritchie** Challenger cattle fountain as his "best buy". "It works super. The water always stays fresh and clean. One night I forgot to turn the power on for the heat and the temperature went down to 10° below. The next morning there was just a little ice around the edge of the water."

**Joseph Langheim, Virden, Ill.:** Joseph's happy with his **Hiniker** model 8100 spray control system. "It was easy to install, program, and operate and has paid for itself many times over because of its accuracy. We've used it for three years with no problems at all."

**Christopher Runstedler, Listowel, Ont.:** "My **Vicon KM 281** mower-conditioner cuts as fast as I can drive and is a best buy. At 15 mph it will leave the cleanest cut hay field you'll ever find. It never plugs. The blades will cut over 2,000 acres if you don't hit any stones."