

## 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

**Alan Milks, Malta, Mont.:** Alan is disappointed with his 1988 Chevrolet Silverado 3/4-ton pickup. "Two months after I bought it the entire dash went out - radio, clock, and fan - and the brake lights went on and stayed on! If that wasn't bad enough the rear end started bending. Because it was still under warranty the dealer fixed it all, including a new rear end, for about \$100. But the disgusting part is that my pickup was worth \$18,000 new and one year later they tell me it's worth about \$12,000. That's not depreciation, that's a rip-off."

On the positive side, Alan is pleased with his 1978 Big Bud 4-WD tractor with 450 hp. "This tractor was built right. I purchased it last year knowing that its K-series Cummins engine and Fuller transmission both had high hours. I know that if I do rebuild the engine and transmission, for about \$4,000 I'd have a 'like new' tractor again."

**Mike Zeig, Sleepy Eye, Minn.:** Mike's "worst buy" is his Boumatic Flow Star milking claws. "About a year and a half ago, I switched to the Flow Star milking claws. At the time I switched, my cows had a cell count of 80,000 to 120,000 but no other serious problems. I was made to believe the Flow Star claws were the best on the market and would improve the cell count and over-

this unit lets me do a professional job. The arc stabilizer allows me to arc the weld without striking, even with a poor ground, and the chart on the lid shows me what setting and rod to use."

**Dennis Nagel, Highland, Ill.:** Dennis's "best buy" is his 1979 Steiger Panther III tractor. "It's easy to maintain, has lots of power and uses less than three-fourths of a gallon of fuel per acre."

**W.R. O'Callaghan, Springfield, Minn.:** A Sparrow Trap made by Last Perch, Inc., Mitchellville, Iowa, heads W.R.'s "worst buy" list. "I haven't caught one bird with it, even though I've placed it in different locations. Sparrows never go near it."

**Larry Schneider, Kenesaw, Neb.:** Larry's happy with his 1982 Mazda B2200 pickup. "It has over 140,000 miles, but I haven't done anything to the engine other than changing oil every 2,500 miles."

**Michael Fowler, Moro, Ark.:** Michael's happy with his 1988 Dodge Ram 3/4-ton pickup. "It's a good work truck for pulling heavy loads, yet it drives and rides like a car and gets good gas mileage."

**Jim Burton, Haddam, Kan.:** "My worst buy is a 1979 Deere 71006-row Max Emerge planter which I used to plant milo, beans, and sunflowers. I no longer own this planter because I didn't like the poor seed metering - no two rows could plant the same amount of seed. Also the drive sprockets broke regularly. White and International make much better planters."

**Glenn Hayden, Derby, Kan.:** Glenn's "best buy" is his 1988 Deere 318 garden tractor. "The placement of the control box and operator convenience make it the easiest-to-use small tractor I've ever owned or used. The smooth engine and excess power are a big plus."

**David Anderson, Grant, Ala.:** "This is the most expensive pile of junk I've ever bought," says David, unhappy with his 1987 Ford 4610 tractor. "It has only 500 hours, but already the engine has been overhauled twice and it still uses some oil. The remote valves work slow and don't hold light implements up. The valves start leaking as soon as I release the lever."

On the positive side, "My 1988 Chevrolet 1/2-ton 4-WD pickup is the best I've ever owned. The 350 engine has plenty of power and the 4-speed automatic transmission shifts smoothly. This pickup averages 13 mpg even when I pull trailers on short trips. The 4-WD works great without making the ride rough. My only complaints are the dash design and the rear bumper - it's only strong enough to pull a boat trailer."

**Tenner Lillard, Estherville, Iowa:** Tenner likes his Bead Buster (Gans Tool Co., P.O. Box 22, Malden, Mass. 02148). "I ordered this product over the phone and liked it so well that I became a dealer. It's drawn fantastic interest at farm shows."

**Jim Anderson, Scranton, Kan.:** "It's a good heavy loader," says Jim, whose 1988 Westendorf WL42 loader nevertheless has had some problems. "Nothing on it is tight and every fitting leaks oil. Whenever I roll the bucket back, it hits the fittings on the front cylinders. When new it required about a half day of tightening and adjusting which should have been done at the factory."

"My 1988 Deutz 9-ft. disc mower does a smooth, even job of cutting at speeds up to 10 mph. I've used it on 500 acres so far and it's been trouble-free. It's inexpensive to operate because the blades on the 10 discs cost only 55 cents apiece compared to the \$90 to \$100 it costs to rebuild the sicklebar on a mower-conditioner."

all udder health. As the year progressed, several of my cows became light quartered and milkout became more and more uneven and incomplete. The company made four changes in equipment design to try to correct the problem, which led me to believe they never field tested the equipment to begin with. The somatic cell count rose steadily until it topped 400,000. I finally had enough and switched back to my original equipment. Boumatic still maintains that their equipment wasn't at fault in spite of the fact that five close neighbors experienced similar problems and have also switched away from Boumatic. I received no compensation for the many thousands of dollars I lost as the result of having to cull several registered cattle that developed unbalanced udders and high cell counts, not to mention lost milk yield and quality premiums."

**Dennis Bryant, Poplar Grove, Ark.:** Dennis nominates his Deere 530 round baler as his "best buy". "I've used Claus, International, and New Holland round balers, but this one is the best yet."

**Rod Spindler, Durand, Wis.:** "My 1986 New Holland 499 Hydro-Swing mower-conditioner is a best buy. It runs quiet and is the most maintenance-free Haybine I've ever owned."

**Buddy Westphal, Polson, Mont.:** "The best buy I've made is my Century "Five Star" AC/DC welder equipped with an arc stabilizer. I'm an inexperienced welder, but