

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

by Harold Johnson
Editorial Director

Mark Newhall
Editor

Bill Gergen
Associate Editor

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Gerald Frates, Paxton, Neb.: "I've owned nothing but Ford pickups since 1959, but this one is a worst buy," says Gerald about his 1988 Ford 4-WD F-250 equipped with a 460 cu. in. engine. "Ford built this pickup to run up and down highways, but not to work. The lightweight dash shakes so hard on a rough road that I'm afraid it'll fall off in my lap. Two exhaust pipes lead to the catalytic converter, and there's only a 3/8-in. space between them. The pipes strip off tall grass and stubble, which wedge in this space and catch on fire. We had five fires during the first month. Also, there's no place on the dash to mount a brake controller or a two-way radio. We had to build our own steel mounting plate and fastened it to the steering column."

James Fox, Brookville, Ind.: "My best buy Massey Ferguson 1155 tractor handles nice and has lots of power. I've used it for five years, making only one repair on a broken fuel gauge."

Ronald Eurton, Borden, Ind.: "My International 274 tractor handles like a dream and is one of my best buys ever. We use the tractor to pull a 5 ft. Bush Hog and a 5 ft. mower, as well as to cultivate. The transmission offers a variety of speeds and the hydraulic system is superior. It's also a real fuel saver."

"This pickup has over 200,000 miles and I haven't greased it once. It doesn't need running boards or a ladder for me to get in."

Larry Ford, Mellette, S.D.: "Rides and handles extremely well, has plenty of room and the 3-liter V-6 engine gets good mileage," says Larry about his 1989 Ford Taurus.

Wayne Jenkins, Springville, Iowa: "It's made from poly board and should last a long time," says Wayne, whose 1988 Meyers manure spreader has nevertheless had some problems. "It doesn't spread a wide enough pattern nor tear apart straw and hay-filled manure. This material sometimes bunches on the ground."

William Penfield, Lemmon, S.D.: "My 1981 Chevrolet Impala diesel automobile, purchased used, has 126,000 miles and a lot more to go. It starts good and doesn't cost much to operate. I'm also pleased with my 1975 Chevrolet 3/4-ton 4-WD pickup which has 102,000 miles, and my 1984 Chevrolet 1/2-ton 2-WD pickup which has 87,000 miles. However, the 305 engine on the 1/2-ton pickup is underpowered for my needs."

Trent Pickard, Fertile, Sask.: Trent is pleased with his Miller AC/DC gas-driven welder. "Dependability and performance are outstanding. During 11 years I've changed the plugs and points and that's all. It has plenty of power for welding or high amp cutting, and offers easy arc starting on most types of welding rods."

Ralph Baldrige, Gillespie, Ill.: Ralph likes his 1988 Ford F-250 Lariat 4-WD pickup equipped with an automatic transmission. "It has an excellent ride and feel for a 3/4-ton pickup. I frequently use it to haul loads of three tons or more, but it still rides level and handles like it's empty. The center arm rest is super comfortable and the red and white 'styleside' body, with a white top, is eye-appealing."

Ervin Bayne, Harrold, S. Dak.: Ervin nominates his 1976 Chevrolet 1/2-ton pickup, converted to run on LP gas, as his "best buy". "At first we used it as a family car, but now we use it around the farm every day. It always starts, is easy to drive and real easy on fuel."

Kent Palmer, Bennett, Neb.: "This is the ultimate truck," says Kent about his 1989 Ford F-350 diesel pickup equipped with 5-speed transmission and a 445 cu. in., 7.3-liter engine.

On the "worst buy" side, "Our McCullough transfer pump was a piece of junk from the start. It wouldn't run even after I spent more than \$80 on repairs. I sold it through a neighbor's farm sale and it brought \$12. I had paid over \$150 for it."

Milfred Jacobson, Hazel Run, Minn.: Milfred, who is retired, says his grandson nominates a 1988 International 4800 field cultivator as a "best buy" "We used it in place of a chisel plow on all of our bean ground."

F.C. Schroeder, Muscatine, Iowa: He's had good luck with his 1987 Kubota 8000 4-WD tractor. "I use it for tilling gardens and for light landscaping activity."

Charles Norman, Pine River, Minn.: "This is the best driving pickup I've ever owned," says Charles, owner of a 1986 Ford F-250 4-WD equipped with a 302 V-8 engine and automatic overdrive 4:11 gears. "We pull a 20-ft. cattle trailer in standard transmission. Otherwise we use overdrive. It gets good mileage and is pleasant to drive."

Charles had bad luck with his Sears 3/8-in. drill. "The jaws are soft and the gears are made from poor material."

"My worst buy is a 1988 Bush Hog 7-ft. rotary mower. The gear box leaks, the deck is built too light, and the blades are difficult to remove."

Joel Vincent, Depauw, Ind.: "It does a better job of cutting grass and clover hay than any other mower I've owned," says Joel about his New Holland 451 belt-drive mower.

Louis Murray, Black River Falls, Wis.: Louis' "best buy" is a plastic feed alley liner from Osseo Plastics, P.O. Box 127, Osseo, Wis. 54758. "It cuts alley-cleaning time by more than 20 minutes and causes cattle to clean up feed better."

Rex Mead, Garden City, Kan.: "My best buy is my 1975 Farmhand 860 grinder-mixer which I bought for \$675 at a farm sale. It has handled more than 5,000 bu. of grain, not counting feed, and I've spent only \$125 to repair it."

Rex has had trouble with his 1986 Sunflower Flex King sweep plow. "After only 600 hours of use, the entire hitch pulled off the main frame. We have to adjust the wheels constantly, and the coulter swing arms keep breaking off."

Walter Osland, Bison, Okla.: Walt's "best buy" is his 1988 Deere 4450 tractor. "Performs without a flaw and dealer followup has been excellent. The power shift transmission works great and it gets good mileage."

Bill Witzany, Le Sueur, Minn.: "My best buy is my 1973 Jeep pickup equipped with a 258 cu. in. 6-cyl. engine," says Bill.