

**Sam Pfening, Hobart, Okla.:** Sam isn't pleased with his 1986 **Versatile 876** tractor equipped with power shift transmission. "You need the agility of a gymnast to pour oil into the engine and it takes a monkey to grease the drive train. In order to reach the oil filler hole on top of the engine, you have to climb up the side of the tractor and try to reach about a foot farther than you're able to so you can unlatch the hood and tilt the hood over. The power shift went out the first day we were in the field while we were pulling a light load. The dealer went to bat for us. But after replacing three transmissions, three hydraulic pumps and rebuilding the engine, we traded it off to avoid disaster after the warranty expired. Our 1988 **Versatile 876** equipped with standard transmission is a good tractor. But I'll never buy another 4-WD tractor of any brand if it's equipped with a power shift."

Sam has had better luck with his 1987 **Honda Acura Integra 5-speed** automobile. "It holds its resale value better than other cars I've owned. I haven't had any maintenance problems after 25,000 miles and it gets over 30 mpg. Interior knobs and switches, which fall off Ford and GM products by the bushel, have stayed put."

**Adolph Stueckemann, Garfield, Kan.:** "It still runs great after 205,000 miles," says Adolph about his "best buy" 1977 **Chevrolet C10 Silverado** pickup which he bought used with 32,000 miles. "I ground the valves at 90,000 miles, overhauled the transmission at 110,000 miles and recently replaced the water pump. That's it. The engine uses only 1 qt. of oil per 1,000 miles."

**Wesley Jones, Rule, Texas:** Wesley's "best buy" is his 1988 **Deere 4450** with MFWD Quad Range transmission. "The front wheel drive assist works great for pulling equipment. It's the best thing ever invented."

A 1985 **Ford F250 3/4 ton** pickup equipped with a 351 HV engine and automatic transmission has been a disappointment. "On a good day it gets only 10 mpg. I could drive a 460 engine as cheap as I can drive this pickup."

**Louis Schuhmacher, Chester, Mont.:** Louis' "worst buy" is his **Great Bend 800** front-end loader which he uses to haul round bales. "I once had the loader in the extended

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position, and the hydraulic cylinders buckled and broke the shafts. I broke three shafts and spent hundreds of dollars on repairs. I finally replaced the cylinders with heavier ones which cost about one third as much as the loader itself."

On the "best buy" side, Louis is pleased with **Turbo II** air pre-cleaners. "They remove much of the dirt before it reaches and clogs air filters, extending air filter life several times over. I use them on my **Versatile 835** tractor and **Massey Ferguson 750** combine."

**Jim Ross, Culvertson, Mont.:** "It runs like a top and gets good fuel mileage," says Ramona, whose 1983 **Ford F-250 3/4-ton** diesel 4-speed pickup has nevertheless had some problems. "The rpm range between third and fourth gears is too wide. It's difficult to get the rpm's up when I'm pulling a 20-ft. livestock trailer."

**William Brown, Walnut Grove, Mo.:**

William says his "worst buy" **Snapper** riding lawn mower constantly needs repair. "Drive belts break about every 10 hours of use and I've replaced the safety start mechanism twice. What's more, the dealer went out of business."

On the plus side, "Our **Suzuki 4-wheeler ATV LT250** is an excellent machine. We've used it every day during the last four years and haven't made any repairs. The 460 engine easily pulls a large livestock trailer."

**W.G. Thompson, Jewell, Kan.:** "My 1987 **Case-IH 2394** tractor has plenty of power for its size, handles well and is equipped with a good air conditioner and cab."

On the negative side, "It's hard to service and change belts on my 44-in. cut **Grasshopper** lawn mower."

**Larry Ashworth, Mattoon, Ill.:** "My worst buy is **Command** herbicide. It failed to suppress velvetleaf even after turning the leaves white."

Larry's "best buy" is his 1988 **Chevrolet 1500 4-WD Silverado** pickup equipped with a 350 engine and automatic transmission with overdrive. "Good power, good ride, fair gas mileage, and no trouble in 20,000 miles."

**Wayne Schuurmans, Tyndall, S.Dak.:** A 1987 **Dunbar Kapple 1051 Vac-U-Vator** heads Wayne's "best buy" list. "We use it to blow all of our corn directly from the dryer into storage bins, and also to suck our beans and oats from bins into a grain trailer. We move corn from one bin to another by sucking from one and blowing into the other at the same time. We can operate the 20 hp electric motor off electricity or the tractor pto."

**Verne Schlueter, Arlington, Minn.:** Verne says his "best buy" is a 1988 **Case-IH 1640** combine equipped with a 20 ft. header and 6-row corn head. "This combine does a super job of threshing. The cab is quiet and comfortable and fuel economy is good. It's easy to change the head from corn to beans."

**John Schoen, Gurley, Neb.:** "This is our third **Dodge** mini van," says John, pleased with his 1989 model equipped with a V-6 engine. "We put on over 20,000 miles a year on these vans and have had no problems with any of them. They get good gas mileage and the service is excellent."

**Gerald Wick, Toivola, Minn.:** Gerald likes his 1988 **New Holland 411** disc mower. "It'll cut through anything - the heavier the crop, the better. It's far superior to any sickle bar mower conditioner."

**John Schmidt, Etzikom, Alberta:** John says his "worst buy" 1986 **Ford Topaz** sedan gets satisfactory gas mileage but has faulty door and trunk seals which allow dirt and snow to enter the car.

On the "best buy" side, "Our 1983 **Ford F-150** pickup has been nearly trouble-free and now has 110,000 kilometers. The only problem was a starter repair and pinion locking nut that came loose, causing an unbalanced universal joint."

**Stewart Carruthers, Embrun, Ontario:** "Our 1988 **Alfa Laval** automatic feed cart, which we use in our tie stall stables, is an excellent piece of equipment."

**Ernie Oshost, Star, Alberta:** A 1985 **White 272 28-ft.** disk heads Ernie's "worst buy" list. "During the first year I replaced three gang axles and all bearings on the front gangs. During the next two years I replaced five more axles and eight bearings. The disk was equipped with flex hangers but they didn't keep the axles from breaking. We traded it in for an **Ezee On 1600**

which has worked fine."

Ernie says his 1977 **Deere 4430** diesel tractor is a "best buy". "It has 3,400 hours with no downtime."

**Robert Chase, Port Alberni, British Columbia:** "My 1987 **New Holland 311** baler doesn't make even bales. It's a worst buy."

**Sheldon Wamboldt, Kentville, Nova Scotia:** "My worst buy is my 1987 **Massey Ferguson Landini 7830 2-WD** tractor. I had to replace the entire rear end and three right front spindles, and completely rebuild the front end. When the front tire went flat, a 750 by 20 size, I couldn't find another one like it in Canada. To solve the problem, I had to weld two 16-in. rims onto the centers of the old rim. Also, this tractor has no power and it smokes."

"Another worst buy is my 1986 **Belarus** manure spreader. Ever since it broke two years ago, I've been unable to get parts from the dealer or the company. I had to buy a second spreader while the Belarus sits idle."

**Keith Lobel, Virden, Manitoba:** Keith isn't pleased with his 1988 **Brandt 620** sprayer. "I have to adjust the boom's height each time I fold the sprayer, and it's an awkward job. Valves on the chemical fill tank are inconveniently located and I get dirty every time I use them. Also the tank doesn't have a pump."

Keith hasn't had good luck with his 1976 **GMC 5000** grain truck either. "There have been problems with the starter, alternator, battery, brake shoes, ignition and carburetor. And it still won't start when it's hot. We replaced the cheap no. 4 battery cables with no. 1 copper cables and now it never hesitates to start."

On the "best buy" side, Keith's happy with his 1987 **Deutz DX 6.50** tractor. "It has plenty of power, good fuel economy, and a comfortable cab and seat."

"Our 1978 **Deutz D100-06** is another best buy. It has 4,000 hours and still uses hardly any oil."

**Ralph Arnold, Keosauqua, Iowa:** "Our 1988 **Black & Decker** cordless screwdriver has enough power to drive screws quickly and retains its charge."

**Dan Briel, Lake Geneva, Wis.:** "My 1987 **Deere 1219** mower conditioner is the best mower I've ever owned. It's built strong and is easy to adjust as conditions vary between fields and cuttings."

**Gale Carpenter, Union City, Mich.:** "It ran like a scalded dog before I traded it," says Gale, unhappy owner of a 1988 **Chevrolet 2500 4-WD** pickup. "At times the 3-speed overdrive transmission slam-shifted from forward to reverse, while at other times, carrying the same load, it would go right into overdrive at 50 mph. The rear differential had to be overhauled three times by 8,000 miles. The right front tire wore bare on the outside but had all its tread left on the inside, and the brakes were shot at 23,000 miles. The dealership did nothing to correct these problems, so I took GM into arbitration. I drove 65 miles to Grand Rapids to have a GM representative tell me 'We don't build a truck to be driven off-road.' He added that the truck wasn't designed to pull a gooseneck trailer, as it changed the geometry of the suspension. I traded for a 1989 **Ford F-250 4-WD** pickup (8,600 lbs. gross vehicle weight) with 4:10 gears, 351 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission. It's built like a **Caterpillar D-8** and rides nice. But it gets only 6 mpg without carrying a load and only 3 mpg carrying a load. It doesn't have enough power to adequately pull a tri-axle trailer loaded with a tractor. If I'm driving

downhill or on a long stretch of level road, the pickup sometimes shifts into overdrive. In this day of college-educated engineers, you'd think a 351 engine that developed 300 hp and got 15 mpg back in the 1960's and 1970's would certainly do better than 200 hp and 6 mpg in the 1980's. Can anyone explain why we have to shell out \$18,500 for a truck that's not worth \$9,000 and go through all these problems? And the company says, 'Oh well, things happen. Sorry about that.'"

**Wesley Love, Arthur, Iowa:** Wesley says his "best buy" is his 1987 **MFS 30-ft.** dia., 7-ring drying bin. "It's equipped with channel-lock floor, DMC grain spreader, 8 in. unloading auger, MFS sweep and 10 hp

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centrifugal fan. This was our first experience drying our own corn and we were pleased. The natural air drying system dried, stored and delivered all grain in perfect condition. We didn't use a grain cleaner, filling bins directly from our combine. The centrifugal fan is so much more quiet than those screaming axial flow fans. Also, MFS supplies an excellent outside-the-bin ladder designed with non-slip rungs. It's wider and sturdier than inside-the-bin ladders."

Wesley also likes his 1988 **Ford F-150 XLT Lariat 1/2-ton** pickup. "It's fully equipped with a small V-8 engine, 4-speed automatic transmission, air conditioning and all the other extras. It has the best ride of any pickup we've tried and gets about 18 mpg. It's an all-around pleasure. We just wish we had bought one sooner."

**Fred Miller, Sherry, Wis.:** "It's a good starting tractor and I like the power shift transmission, but I wish it had more gears and shifted easier between gear ranges," says Roger, who generally is satisfied with his 1985 **Case 2294 4-WD** tractor.

On the "worst buy" side, "My **Skil 3/8-in.** electric hand drill is underpowered and gets hot when I use any bit wider than 1/4 in. dia. Also the chuck won't stay tight unless I use a wrench on it."

**Delmar Mumma, Alamota, Kan.:** "Dealer service has been great. But how do you fix something that wasn't any good to begin with?" asks Delmar, unhappy with his 1988 **Ford F-150 XLT 1/2-ton** pickup. "It gets only 10 to 13 mpg and its doors are fastened on with plastic. If there's any weight in the bed, the rear bumper hangs so low I can't pull anything without dragging it."

On the positive side, Delmar's pleased with his 1987 **Deere 4450** tractor. "It has plenty of power, a good range of gears for field work, easy-coupling hydraulics, a clear-view cab, and it starts good."

**David Otting, Clearbrook, Minn.:** "Thanks to **FARM SHOW**, my best buy is a 12-wheel rake I first read about in an issue last year. The rake narrows to 8 ft. wide for transport, folds in or out easily, pulls with anything that has a hitch, and individual wheels raise and roll over rocks and gopher mounds. It's a simple design that'll combine three 9-ft. haybine swaths together in one pass working fast with minimum maintenance. We pick up the swath with our **Vermeer** round baler without zig-zag driv-

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