

Best & Worst Buys

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ing. I bought one last spring and used it all summer. I have a lot of small odd-shaped fields with rocks and gopher mounds so I really put it to the test. I had some problems with parts of it that were not built of strong enough material. I talked to Mr. Kuehn and learned he had made changes since my purchase and he corrected our problems with upgraded replacement parts at no cost to me.

"Kuehn recently sold his rake design to H&S Manufacturing (P.O. Box 768, Marshfield, Wis. 54449, ph 715 387-3414) because he could not keep up with orders."

Lauren Steine, Butterfield, Minn.: On the "best buy" side, Lauren nominates his 1983 Case 4690 4-WD tractor. "It has good power, a quiet cab, a tilt hood for easy service, and a four-way selective steering system for easy maneuvering."

Joe Wenzel, Jr., Jackson, Minn.: "I prefer to buy American-made products but this pickup has turned my head," says Joe, owner of a 1986 Mazda. "I bought it new in 1985 and gave it to my boy for driving to school. He's still driving it today. After 120,000 miles it looks like new and gets 27 mpg. I installed new brakes twice but haven't spent one dime on the engine."

Darrell Nikolaisen, Hanley Falls, Minn.: Darrell is pleased with his 1988 Deere SX 95 mower. "I particularly like the smooth and vibration-free 12 hp Kawasaki engine."

On the "worst buy" side, Darrell nominates his Westgo 31 and 61 pto grain augers. "The flighting sections don't match correctly, and a flap, welded to the flighting shaft on the discharge end, causes wet grain to plug up."

John Jensen, Beresford, S. D.: "The wide foot boards and the variable transmission make it easy to ride," says John, pleased with his 1988 Polaris Trail Boss 4-wheeler. "I built my own sprayer and wagon for it and use them almost daily."

John also likes his 1981 Deere 8440 tractor.

His "worst buy" is a Deere 2800 on-land plow. "This plow wears out landslides faster than any other one I've owned because it tends to 'pull out' toward unplowed ground. Also, its steering cylinder doesn't seem to phase correctly. We tried new steering valves but they didn't help."

Larry Dambacher, Taylorville, Ill.: "It looks like a dying quail when I fold the wings at the end of the field," says Larry about his "worst buy" 1988 Deere 12-row flex planter. "I have to stop and let the wings settle down because the two-way hydraulic cylinders on the center section and one-way cylinders on the wings don't come down at the same rate of speed."

Carl Bock, London Mills, Ill.: "It's a real work horse and one of the few saws that's handy to use for a left handed person," says Carl about his "best buy" Poulan 4400 chain saw.

Vern Searls, Medora, Ill.: A 1988 Krone 150 round baler heads Vern's "best buy" list. "This baler consistently makes a quality 950 to 1,000 lb. bale. It's also easy to operate and maintain."

Also making Vern's "best buy" list is an M & W rotary hoe. "It works great in trash because of the wide spacing between axles. I use it in heavy corn stalks after planting on

ridges. It never clogs up."

Walter Haselhorst, Gorham, Kan.: "This little jewel has 97,800 miles and it still gets 44 to 46 mpg," says Walter, pleased with his 1981 Volkswagen 1/2-ton diesel pickup equipped with front wheel drive. "We use it for rounding up cattle and for hauling a 150-gal. fuel tank to our fields. It's virtually maintenance-free and it's always ready for more. Why can't the good old U.S.A. build a pickup as good as this one?"

Gilbert Weber, Crookston, Minn.: Gilbert didn't like his 1985 International chisel plow, a 31-ft. model with folding wings, so he traded it in for a new Case-IH model which he's satisfied with. "The wings' frames wouldn't hold together so we had them welded and reinforced twice. The company offered to replace the wings but we traded instead."

James Reid, Sacred Heart, Minn.: "My Yanmar 48-in. cut diesel lawn mower uses only 1/3 gal. of fuel per hour."

Donald Hartman, Palmer, Iowa: "I'll put my F-2 diesel Gleaner up against any other combine model on the market," says Donald. "It puts clean grain in the tank and is easy to service. Walking around it I can clearly see every bearing, chain, and belt."

Robert Otten, Millstadt, Ill.: Heading Robert's "best buy" list is his 1988 Deere 4450 with MFWD. "This tractor is comfortable, powerful, and easy to handle. I previously owned a tractor of another brand rated at 160 hp. The 4450, rated at 140 hp, out-pulls it."

Fred Dunlop, Stayner, Ontario: "It starts great in cold weather and stays cool during summer," says Fred, who owns a 1984 Deere 2550 4-WD. "We use this versatile tractor for planting, spraying and plowing. It turns tight and the Sound Gard cab is compact and quiet."

Arville Lammers, Shawmut, Mont.: Arville likes his 1988 Deere 4450 tractor. "It has good power and fuel economy, the best cab on the market, and a 12-speed power shift with a gear for every job."

Lamar Faught, Jonesboro, Ark.: Lamar's "best buy" is his 1986 Ford F250 4 by 4 diesel pickup equipped with 4-speed transmission. "We use it to pull a trailer loaded with a backhoe - a 16,000 lb. load. It drives great and averages 16 mpg. It's a much better truck than the 1979 Ford F250 we owned before."

He also likes his 1977 Ford 6600 tractor. "It handles well, doesn't use much oil, and is powerful for its size."

Marvin Hagen, Etzikom, Alberta: Marvin's "best buy" is a high performance cylinder, purchased from Mel Stovel Enterprises (Box 142, Foremost, Alberta, Canada) which he read about in FARM SHOW. It's installed on his 1979 International 914 pull-type combine. "This cylinder boosts capacity about 50% and results in cleaner grain with less cracking, less throw over the straw walkers and less fuel consumption. It makes the entire combine run smoother."

Another "best buy" also comes from Mel Stovel Enterprises. It's an axle attachment on an International 914 pull-type combine that runs the combine at a 22° angle to the swath. "The wheels still run parallel with the tractor wheels," says Marvin. "By running the combine at a 22° angle, the pickup

does a great job in light or heavy swaths. The combine can be moved back into standard position in less than 20 minutes."

Leonard Welter, Harrisburg, S.D.: Leonard likes his 62-ft. Koyker 850 auger equipped with hydraulic lift and hopper. "The auger stays hooked directly to the tractor, making the auger easy to position. Also, the swinging hopper works super."

Leonard's "worst buy" is his Dixon 427 lawn mower. "Its Kawasaki engine, maneuverability and drive system are the greatest, but the mower deck is the pits. I have to clean it out every time I mow. It should be deeper to prevent green clippings from accumulating and plugging up. High lift blades help some but they also suck up rocks."

Evan Ernst, Utica, Ohio: "My worst buy is an International 47 baler equipped with a kicker," says Evan. "We've spent lots of time and money trying to get this

"We spent lots of time and money trying to get this baler to tie right."

baler to tie right, without success. Other people say they have the same problem.

Roger Radloff, Oshkosh, Wis.: "My 1986 Deere AMT 600 5-wheeler is handy, trouble-free and gets good mileage. I built a front towing bar on it so I can pull it to the field behind my tractor and implement. At milking time, I drive the AMT home, leaving the tractor and implement in the field. We also use it to pick up rocks."

Arthur Mangels, Polson, Mont.: Arthur is pleased with his "best buy" Case-IH 445 baler. "It produces much more uniform bales than Deere or New Holland balers, and doesn't cut a short chunk of plastic twine and leave it lying on the hay as some brands do. However, this baler should have a heavier gearbox and driveline."

Arthur says his "worst buy" is his 1985 Deere 2550 tractor equipped with MFWD. "The hydraulic system leaks and the Deere 245 QuickTach front-end loader doesn't have enough lifting capacity. Also, loader mounting brackets in front of the windows interfere with visibility for row crop work."

Clyde Gumbert, Mondovi, Wis.: "It spreads everything from water to pen packed manure," says Clyde, happy with his 1987 Hedlund Martin S 1257 side-delivery manure spreader built by Gehl. "Side delivery action lets me spread manure as thick or thin as I want while covering a wide area. However, it doesn't spread dry manure well."

Kenneth Gunderson, Galesville, Wis.: "Anyone with a fence will find this product useful," says Kenneth, owner of a Reel-Tite manufactured by Kermco Products (RR 1, Box 204, Monroe, Iowa 50170). "I use Reel-Tite on my cow-calf operation to tighten barbed wire fences at least once a year. It's simple and easy to use."

Kenneth also likes his New Holland 411 disc mower. "I think that within 10 years discs will become standard equipment on all mowers. I know I'll never buy another sickle-type mower."

Kenneth says his "worst buy" is a 9-ft. Bush Hog 3108 rotary cutter. "I'm almost afraid to use it because it's already had three major breakdowns. Parts are hard to come by because the gear boxes and associated components are built in Italy. The parts trickle in, not in days or weeks but in months.

I'd trade or sell this machine, but I'd feel bad knowing someone else would be stuck with it. Before you buy a Bush Hog implement, make sure you find out where it was manufactured."

David Hall, Brooklyn, Iowa: David has had good luck with his 1986 Ford F-150 4-WD pickup equipped with a fuel-injected 302 engine. "This is the best riding, best driving pickup I've ever owned. It has plenty of power and gets good gas mileage."

Shelby Sanders, Carthage, Miss.: "My best buy is a 1979 Deutz 4506 tractor. After 4,000 hours of use, the only problems have been with the voltage regulator and a broken rear axle shaft. It uses far less fuel than the American brand, England-made blue tractor I previously owned."

Chuck Svetlik, Beaver Creek, Ore.: Chuck's had bad luck with his 1984 Yanmar 276D diesel 4-WD tractor equipped with a YFL 1000 front-end loader and a Yanmar 800 backhoe. "At first it was a pleasure to drive - a powerful tractor for its 27 to 30 hp class. I pulled my baler and a rototiller with it. After six months, the engine began losing oil, the power steering went bad, and it wouldn't start. Then the 4-WD failed. The dealer told me the problem was that a nut had cracked off, but he kept the tractor for eight days. Three months later, at 180 hours, the rear end housing cracked, and he kept the tractor for 40 days. Then all six bolts holding the drawbar assembly failed and my baler fell away from the tractor on-the-go, fouling up the pto shaft. At 386 hours, the bearings seized and the engine froze. Another problem is that there's only 2 in. of clearance, between the air cleaner and the muffler, where I can see the bottom of the front-end loader. But the biggest problem is that the tractor won't always start. I have to jump start it by bypassing the starter's solenoid safety switch. But if the tractor is in gear when it starts, it could run me over. I drove 56 miles to return the tractor for repairs under warranty, and Yanmar did pick up the tab. But ever since then, I've been buying hydraulic hoses, as well as repairing the 3-pt. hitch, front axle shaft, hub spindles, and steering arms. I'm getting tired of waiting for parts. The dealer told me I'm carrying too much weight on the tractor, that it was built to carry light loads for 'weekend farmers'. Then why does it have a bucket capacity of 1,000 lbs.?

If Yanmar wants to sell its tractors here in the U.S.A., they'd better keep parts on hand and stand behind their product."

J.W. Johnston, Oxford Station, Ontario: "It leaks like a sieve because of defective O-rings and valves, which limits pressure to 5 lbs.," says J.W. about his "worst buy" Hardi orchard sprayer. "Also, the company installed the agitator control upside down so that when I think I'm turning the sprayer on, I'm turning it off and vice versa."

Greg Vanhie, London, Ontario: Greg nominates his 1988 Case-IH 5100 Soy Special 21-run double disc seed drill, equipped with depth gauge press wheels, as his "best buy". "It accurately meters seed and delivers good down pressure on each run. The depth gauge press wheels are probably the best in the industry and accurately control seeding depth. However, the acre counter doesn't work right because of a poor linkage setup, and the clevis-style drawbar hitch is far too sloppy. We altered the clevis to make it solid. Case-IH does offer a solid ball-style drawbar but at extra cost."