

ate. After seven months of twice-a-day use, the only problem has been a fouled sparkplug. The Honda gas engine starts with one pull almost every time.

"I also like my **Surge** mini-orbit milkers. They're lightweight and milk the cows fast and evenly."

He says he's also pleased with his **1988 New Holland 355 grinder/mixer** featuring computerized weigh scales. "The scales are so accurate that I can buy protein supplement in bulk and save money. Also, the hammermill has plenty of capacity."

Lester Indrebo, Osseo, Wis.: "My **1988 Stihl** model FS66 brush cutter is well balanced and easy to use. I use it with a saw blade to cut brush."

Brian Espensen, West Branch, Iowa: "We've had no problems with cracked frames or boxes like we've experienced with some other wagons," reports Herbert, pleased with his **1986 Parker 4800** wagons and running gear. "The wagons unload nicely. You don't have to get inside and push out half a load."

Brian's disappointed with his **Demco** sprayer marker system. "It's supposed to spray a mixture of diesel fuel and aluminum paint, but it never has worked. The control box failed soon after we bought the unit. It took a month to get a new one and by then we were done spraying. The solenoids on the boom ends are constantly plugged or don't work."

Robert Frey, Phillipsburg, N.J.: "We've owned **Ladig** haylage and high moisture corn unloaders for 14 years. They're dependable, owner-serviceable and far less expensive to maintain than comparable **Harvester** units."

Robert's had problems with his **Sears 1/2-in.** electric drills, **1/4-in.** battery-powered electric drills and **1 hp** air compressors. "They're apparently designed for once-a-year homeowner use and not for farm use."

Bob Comfort, Fenwick, Ontario: Bob likes his **Hesston 4570** center-line square baler. "The bales are consistently solid and work perfectly with my other best buy - a used **New Holland 1069** stock cruiser."

Gary Kuechenmeister, Melvin, Mich.: "My best buy is a **1987 Gehl 308** finger-wheel-type V-rake. It's easy to use and rakes cleanly, placing two windrows side by side so I can bale without weaving from side to side."

"I'm also pleased with my **DR Trimmer/Mower** which I bought in 1986 from **Country Home Products** (Box 89, Cedar Beach Road, Charlott, Vt. 05445 (ph 802 425-2196)). It's powered by a quiet, smooth four-stroke **Briggs & Stratton** engine that's balanced over a pair of large wheels. The nylon cutting cords are the heaviest I've seen and I can fasten four or more leads on the machine. I can cut heavy weeds fast without having to carry the machine and feeling all 'shook up' afterward."

Gary also likes his **Sur-Lock "Quick Tach"** made by **MDS Mfg. Co.** (Parkston, S. Dak. (ph 605 928-7951) for **Deere** and **Farmhand** loaders. "It lets me switch from one bucket to another or to my bale spear quickly and easily right from the tractor seat and it's priced fairly."

Mitchell Ostrom, Finley, N.Dak.: "I don't know how I farmed without them before," says Mitchell, happy with his **Uniden** business band radios equipped with phone patches. "The radios make our operation much more efficient because we can make phone calls right from the tractor seat and always know what's happening on our farm."

Albert Prestin, Wenona, Ill.: Albert has had problems with his **1982 Chevrolet 6.2** diesel 1/2-ton truck equipped with 4-speed automatic overdrive. "I wish it had a 4-speed manual transmission so I could pull a trailer. I've rebuilt the transmission four times but it still slips badly so I quit driving

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the truck. The dealers all know this truck has a junk transmission so they won't allow anything for the truck on a trade. What can I do? Local rebuilders won't work on these transmissions if they must warranty them. One rebuilder told me he gives a '5 and 50' warranty. That's 5 minutes or 50 feet."

Jerry Isaak, Dodge, N. Dak.: Jerry isn't pleased with **Ams Oil 10W40** synthetic oil. "I used this oil to break in a rebuilt engine on my **GMC** pickup. After 3,400 miles it ruined the new rocker arms and reamed out a valve guide. We made the repairs with new parts and installed new **Ams Oil** and filter. After another 1,600 miles a rod bearing went out. We then disassembled the engine and discovered that the new rocker arms were burned again and the new pistons showed a burned-brown varnish like the cylinder walls. The crank and cam shaft were also ruined. I had to completely rebuild the engine again. Since then I've switched back to **Mobil 10W30** oil and the engine works fine."

John Benedict, Caledonia, N.Y.: John likes his **Deutz-Fahr DX160A** tractor. "Drives well, has excellent fuel economy. However, the hydraulics could be improved."

On the "worst buy" side, John nominates his **Case-IH** spring-cushioned disk. "I've broken several spring hangers on the front gangs and the heavy wing irons keep breaking loose at their pivot points."

Rex Sullinger, Ridgeway, Ohio: "I'd recommend it to anyone," says Rex, pleased with his **1988 Sunflower 1232** disk. "It does a great job of cutting corn stalks in the fall, leaving a mulch to protect the soil. It also works great for finishing ground in the spring. "During the past year I haven't made a purchase that I'd classify as a 'worst buy' because I subscribe to **FARM SHOW**."

Daniel Wiltse, Lisbon, N.Dak.: "We haven't found a bug in it yet," says Daniel about his **1988 Versatile 876 4-wheel** drive tractor. "It drives well, offers great visibility and economy, and has considerably more power than the **Steiger 270** which it replaced."

Daniel isn't happy with his **1988 Crary 20-ft. Air Reel**. "It worked fine in short, thin crops where there was no foxtail, bochia or other green weeds. But in weeds and heavier crops it slowed the combine down and probably didn't save anything at all. It's supposed to work in soybeans but they got tangled on the air tubes. After making one round on a headland, we switched back to a finger reel."

Terry Ryan, Macklin, Sask.: He likes his **Marshall's** paper marker (Turtleford, Sask.). "It caused us a lot of headaches the first year when we were spraying over rough ground. The paper would spill off the reel or jam in the paper rollers. But the following year the manufacturer provided us with two completely redesigned units free of charge. We've been very satisfied with its perform-

ance over the last three seasons. The bright fluorescent orange strips of paper make an easy-to-follow trail."

Terry is also pleased with his **Derdall's Reel Bat** (Derdall's Irrigation Farm, Outlook, Sask.) mounted on his **International 1482** combine. "We previously had problems with short barley feeding unevenly into the table auger and jamming between the pickup belt and stripper plate. This rotary reel bat forces the crop under the auger as soon as it clears the pickup. It also prevents any hesitation of the crop between pickup and table auger. As a result, we now have very few 'auger jams' in heavy canola and wheat."

Richard Roth, Scott City, Mo.: "My **1976 Ford 3600** diesel tractor is my best buy. I replaced the water pump last year and that's been the only major repair."

D.J. Armstrong, Nouta Gower, Ontario: D.J. likes his **Deere 1075** wagon. "I can tow it on the road behind any vehicle at any speed."

However, he's disappointed with **Sutazine** corn herbicide. "It didn't control my weeds."

Ernest Hoover, Manheim, Penn.: "The dealer told me this machine is well built, but I hadn't used it long before I bent a shank," says Ernest, unhappy with his **Kewanee 580** tillage saver. "I replaced the shank under warranty, but one spring and a few rocks later at least four of the shanks were bent. I wouldn't recommend this implement even if your soil is only slightly rocky."

Duane Riddle, Rochester, Ind.: Duane is pleased with his **36-ft. 8-ring Brock** grain bin, purchased in 1986, as well as several accessories. "The bin is strong and easy to construct. The **Caldwell 15 hp** centrifugal fan is so quiet you can stand next to it and talk. The **DMC Red Giant 4-auger** stirrator is the simplest and most reliable on the market. The **Hutchinson 8-in.** in-bin unloading auger with commercial powersweep is powered by a motor outside the bin, so you don't have to drag the sweep auger in and out of the bin every time you want to clean it out. It loads fast."

Duane is also generally satisfied with his **Ford TW-25** tractor but says it nevertheless has had problems. "It has good power, lugging ability and fuel economy, and the front wheel assist is well worth the money. However, the company has to get the muf-

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fler out of my face so I can see where I'm going. And it's not geared properly for tillage work. There's almost a 2 mph jump between third high and fourth low. If Ford doesn't introduce its powershift, I'll soon be driving a new Magnum."

Duane is also pleased with equipment mounted on his sprayrig, including **Knowles** running gear with floating tandem, **Raven 750 gal.** elliptical tank, and a 45-ft. air shock boom made by **DeSchepper Farm Supply** (Wyatt, Ind.). "The running gear is built heavy and the floating tandem removes many of the bumps. The elliptical tank keeps the center of gravity low, and I can see over it from the tractor seat which is a real plus on the highway. Gallon markings help when refilling. But the best part is the boom

air shock ride. It's built heavy and performs far better than I expected."

Sanford Qvale, Ray, N.Dak.: A **Miller 250 AC/DC** arc welder heads Sanford's "best buy" list. "It makes a very uniform bead in any position, has a dial so I can easily change the amperage and runs very efficiently. It's a good size for overall farm welding."

Linwood Thompson, Tenants Harbor, Maine.: "It starts good winter or summer, uses no oil and burns only one gallon of fuel per hour. However it has had some problems," says Linwood about his **1984 Deere 10504-WD** tractor which he uses for disking and tilling. "This tractor needs power steering and wet brakes. But my biggest gripe is that it only has two speeds in reverse. Low speed is about right for mowing alder and heavy bushes, but it's too slow for mowing hay. High range in reverse is too fast for doing almost any kind of work. It's much easier to shift into reverse at the end of the field and back up while mowing than to take the time to turn around. Besides, turning too fast on wet ground digs up the soil too much."

Linwood also says **Bush Hog** mowers should be equipped with string-trimmers for mowing in rocky areas. "I spend too many dollars for mower blades each year."

Louie Christensen, Nome, N.Dak.: "My **DMI "Tiger Two" 7-shank** deep ripper was in the shop for warranty repairs for two of the first three months after I bought it last August," says Louie, who operates the ripper at 14-in. depths. "Our dry fall should have been ideal for shattering the hardpan. However, the ripper couldn't handle rocks despite being equipped both with spring trips and shear bolts. After 475 acres, four of its seven shank assemblies were sprung. The geometry of the spring trip is faulty because it requires more upward motion than backward motion to trip, so it works only on 'round-top' rocks. I use grade no. 2 shear bolts as recommended, yet I still have 20 lbs. of sheared bolts lying in the tractor cab to prove that they don't work when they hook a rock solidly. The shank assembly bends sideways and tries to go around the rock. Side thrust is transferred upward to the draft links and is multiplied by the leverage involved. However, the links can't take that much stress in that direction. The bent shanks ride out of the ground causing the machine to pull crooked. As a result, soil abrasion is transferred to soft steel on the side of the point instead of on the hard surfacing at the tip. **DMI** replaced all bent parts, but with duplicates of the original. I fail to see how this can remedy the problem because the design has been proven inadequate. By next fall the warranty will have expired which, I suppose, will cure the problem for **DMI**."

On the positive side, Louie ranks his **Case-IH 496** spring-cushion 28 1/2-ft. wide tandem disk as a "best buy". "Although I pull it at 6 1/2 mph, rock damage has been minimal. The lengthwise cushioning of the suspension members, as well as the vertical movement of the gangs, absorbs enough shock to make disk or spool breakage a rarity. My only criticism concerns the gang hanger bearings. Flexing of the cushion springs causes some of the spherical race bearings to turn in their retainers, resulting in misalignment of the grease fittings so that they no longer accept grease. There's no way to correct the misalignment."

Another "best buy" is his **1979 Steiger ST270** tractor powered by a **3306 Caterpil-**

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