

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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Albert Preston, Wenona, Ill.: "I read with interest the report in the last issue of FARM SHOW from Joe Park, Tupperville, Ont., who said he'd broken three axle yokes on his Versatile 895 tractor, and that Versatile's response was that he was the first person who'd ever had that type of breakdown. Well, we've had the very same problem with our 850 Versatile and were told the same thing — that ours was an unusual, isolated case. Baloney!

"This is a serious, widespread problem which Versatile refuses to recognize. I'd like to hear from other owners who've also had problems with axle breakage. Maybe we can get together to initiate a class-action solution to the problem, if that's what it takes to right a wrong.

"We've had two broken axles on our 850 since we purchased it new. However, since it had stood in stock for two years, the company called it a two-year-old tractor out of warranty and refused to pay for the repairs. The axle problem is with the cast iron housings or yokes. Initially, they came with a small hole in them which apparently was to accommodate a painting hook. They've removed this hole in new replacement housings but it still hasn't solved the problem. A neighboring Versatile owner who's experienced four broken axle housings with

be any different in a new Triggs trailer.

"I wrote to Triggs. They called back, offering to put in new heavier axles and straighten and reinforce the floor for \$500. I told him we had already paid an extra \$1,000 for it over the price of a competitive model because we were assured we were getting the Cadillac of trailers. After a second letter, Triggs called back. He wouldn't budge on his \$500 offer. When I wouldn't accept, he hung up.

"We've turned the tires around to wear from the other side and drive down the road with our bowlegged Triggs trailer dragging its rear."

Loren L. Ferguson, Phillipsburg, Kan.: "It's a dream to run and the most trouble-free piece of farm equipment I've owned in 50 years of farming," says Loren, pleased with his International 1460 rotary combine.

Roy R. Robinson, Newberry, Mich.: He had trouble with his Shopsmith Mark V. "The motor burned up after only 12 hrs. use over 2 years. I could get no satisfaction from the company. They said it needed to be run more. I have built two houses in the past 2 years with the same skill saw and never burned out a blade or motor. I'm not hard on equipment."

Bill Knoff, Nahotah, Wis.: Bill says his 1988 GMC 454 "Dually" pickup with automatic transmission is "best buy". "It's an excellent truck that's quiet and comfortable. The stereo is especially nice. I've got 15,000 miles on it without a problem. The 454 fuel-injected engine has plenty of power and gets better mileage than my 1985 model 454 pickup."

Nick V. Siuda, Manistee, Mich.: "The only thing worse than Baldwin filters is Baldwin customer service. If I had to choose between using a Baldwin filter and no filter, I would never use a filter again," says Nick, who had trouble with Baldwin C40F filters. "After 68 hrs., cotton fibers were forced out of the filter and into oil lines on my Ford 8N tractor and oil pressure, which was normally 20 to 30 psi, was at 60 to 80 psi. Oil began to leak from oil lines and gaskets. I put another filter on and after only 1 hr. cotton fibers were being forced out of the filter into the oil lines and oil pressure was at 40 to 50 psi. After 10 months of working with the dealer and company, we have not been able to get a satisfactory response."

Jennings Anderson, Mineral Point, Wis.: "My Deutz DX120 is a piece of junk. The 3-pt. hitch broke the day I bought the tractor. Soon after the front axle came out from under the tractor and one front rim cracked and broke. At 300 hrs. the motor locked up. I rebuilt the motor to the tune of \$5,000 and found out the tractor had had the wrong thermostat put in at the factory. The company wouldn't accept any responsibility for it or pay for any portion of the repairs even though the dealer had come out 6 times during the first two months we owned the tractor to try to figure out why it was overheating. If they had found the problem, we wouldn't have ruined the motor. Then we had to replace the clutch at a cost of \$2,000. We waited two weeks during the first part of May while they sent to Germany for a clutch. I should have been planting corn.

"The tractor is put together without gaskets or lock washers. The bolts in the rear axle housing keep coming loose. You have to watch them so you don't lose the gear oil. The parking brake is useless. When you release it, it drags and smokes. There's no way to keep steady tension on the alternator

holes just broke a fifth — which didn't have this hole. My son won't even drive our 850 for fear that another axle will break. When it does, the tractor suddenly stops and drops down, exposing the driver to possible severe injuries. If this breakage happened on a busy road, hard telling how many people might be injured or even killed. Versatile lied in telling me I was the only one with this problem. They should recall all affected tractors and replace the cast iron housings with steel — before somebody gets killed or seriously injured."

Herman Ostry, Bruno, Neb.: "A Triggs 6 by 16 gooseneck stock trailer has to be one of our worst buys. We purchased it new in 1981 and use it just for our own use. It doesn't have many miles on it and, looking at it when its empty and with a wax job, it still looks like new.

"After some use, however, we noticed that the tires were wearing from the inside. Then we noticed that the wheels were developing a bowlegged appearance. Taking a closer look underneath, we noticed the floor had a permanent sag of about 2-1/2 in. in it. I talked to the dealer and he said the axles had lost their arch and that we must have overloaded it. I told him we'd never had it loaded even close to its 10,000 lbs. rated capacity. He offered to have the arch put back into the axles — to bend them back up. We declined, reasoning that that kind of repair wouldn't last. He offered to trade. I refused because I felt the quality wouldn't

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OPINION