

Best And Worst Buys

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hours later another valve dropped. Deere rebuilt the cylinder and put in all new valves. Dealer service was excellent and Deere was good about repairing the tractor but they couldn't explain the valve problem.

"Our best buy is **Northrup-King NK 300** forage sorghum. The variety has an excellent grain-to-stover ratio that makes great silage on soils not suited for corn. Its large stalk doesn't grow over 6-ft. tall, which prevents lodging that's quite common in most forage sorghum."

Vincent Manhart, Palestine, Ill.: Vincent's "worst buy" is a set of **M & W** sleeves and pistons with a 3-year, 3,000 hr. guarantee. "The performance wasn't too bad but they only lasted 500 hrs. before the 'O-rings' rotted out. The company would only back part of the bill."

On the plus side, he's happy with his pair of **490 International** disks. "They're the only disks we've had that we could run in the same track twice. They cut well and perform great with minor adjustments under almost all ground conditions."

Lowell Friedline, Boswell, Penn.: "Four-in. grinding wheels from **Harbor Freight & Salvage Co.**, wear away quite rapidly so that ultimately their cost is about the same as a better quality wheel which lasts longer. This isn't to say all of their products are poor as I bought an 'O-ring' kit from them which has saved me a lot of time and money."

"My best buy is a **1984 Meyers 225** bu. manure spreader. It's well-built with a straight-forward design. Hasn't had any mechanical problems. However, the paint quality is poor and the hydraulic two-cylinder tailgate, although sturdily built, needs a better seal design."

John Sigler, New Riegel, Ohio: "We like our **Walters** machine shed. It's built strong and the crew did a good job setting it up. But I was disappointed in some of their finishing work. The gutter is seamed above the door and a low spot at the seam is causing problems."

Leland Matson, Burns Lake, B.C.: "We bought our **1982 Ford 7710 4-WD** tractor with 783 hrs. It handles well, has good power, starts well, has a nice quiet cab and has a good turning radius in close quarters. However, the Ford front-end loader which came with the tractor is disappointing after the loaders we had on 2 previous tractors. Lifting height is poor for the size of tractor and loader and lift power is inadequate especially on tilt."

Robert B. Wiley Jr., Boone, Colo.: He nominates his **New Holland L-555** skid-steer loader as "worst buy". "It's just one year old. It developed hydraulic leaks shortly after purchase and the wheel seals went out. They fixed them and it lasted about 3 months. Now it's leaking again. The machine is very well-balanced and very maneuverable but is so low to the ground that it picks up dry

manure around the engine and must be frequently cleaned out or it'll catch on fire. This is our second **L-555**. The first one lasted two years and was in the shop more than out for oil leaks, seals, and a fire. We'd hope that in two years the company would have gotten the bugs out."

"Our best buy is a **Buster Bar** from **Midwest Industries**. It fits on our 4-bottom, 18-in. moldboard plow and leaves level, clodless plowed soil. It paid for itself in one season."

Ray L. Capps, Greenfield, Tenn.: "My best purchase last year was a **1980 F-2 Allis Chalmers** Gleaner combine. It's easy to service and repair and fuel economy is the best. I shelled 400 acres of corn with it this year and only replaced two bearings."

He's not as happy with a **1979 Chevrolet C-10** diesel pickup. "I wouldn't buy another GM product. At 42,000 miles, the crankshaft broke. No help from the company. We put in a new motor. After a few thousand miles, I couldn't keep head gaskets on it. I took the engine out and put in a gas engine."

David McKee, Lewisville, N.C.: "The first year we used our **Niemeyer**

"Anyone making hay shouldn't be without one."

HR 301 tedder it paid for itself two times over by allowing us into the fields on little notice to make hay between rain showers. Even with a little rain, we can stay in the field when everybody else is waiting for their hay to dry. Anyone making hay shouldn't be without one."

William J. Rice, Hurdle Mills, N.C.: As "best buy" William names his **International 450** plow. "Does everything the company said it'd do."

Fred Dunlop, Stayner, Ont.: "As best buy, I'm completely satisfied with my 14-ton double reach **Horst** wagon. These wagons can be equipped with 18 by 22.5 truck tires which make them great for flotation in wet fields. I've equipped the wagon with a 400 bu. Kilbros gravity box with 20-in. side extensions."

"Another good buy is a **Deere 7000** plateless corn planter. Uniformity and stand of corn is great."

Robert Tam, Idaville, Ind.: An **Aqua Therm** (Box 281, Broton, Minn.) outside furnace tops his "best buy" list. "Well-made, economical, provides lots of heat and is easy to fix."

Levern L. Joseph, Lebanon, Ill.: "My **Homelite 330** chain saw is good starting, has plenty of power and is fast-cutting."

Mark Rathbun, Maywood, Mo.: "In 1978 I bought a 1973 **Internation**

205 combine. It had been well-taken care of and was one of my best buys until Case took over the company. I have a lot of IH farm tools and tractors, but now when I go into the new Case-IH dealership, the parts man smiles and says 'Sorry, that part's no longer available'. Yet, you can get anything you want for Case products. I'll never buy anything red again."

Dale Farney, Lowville, N.Y.: He nominates a **1984 Hesston 7155** field chopper and a **1971 New Holland L-35** skid steer loader as "best buys". "The chopper has fewer moving parts than most choppers which makes for easier servicing and fewer breakdowns. We're extremely pleased with this easy-running, high-capacity chopper."

"The skid-steer loader is one of the best buys we've ever made. After 15 years of doing everything from cleaning our free stalls to digging rocks off our cropland, this machine is still going strong. The Wisconsin air-cooled engine has never been touched except for oil changes and plugs and points."

Paul Nottingham, Nunica, Mich.: "My 1/2-in. **Milwaukee** electric drill motor is expensive but rugged. I ran over it with a pickup but didn't hurt it. It can be operated steady for over an hour honing a cylinder block and hardly get warm."

He's not as happy with his **Sears Craftsman** micro-torque click-stop torque wrench. "From the beginning, it failed to click when set torque was reached. I sent it back to factory for repair. Two months later I got it back and it did exactly the same thing as before. I threw it away."

Terry Scroggin, Mt. Pulaski, Ill.: "Our **Lester** pole building was delivered and constructed on time and the crew left no mess behind. They have a very well-constructed building and pound for pound it was less expensive than the competition."

"Another best buy is flavored 'Rodent Cake' by **Bell Laboratory**. It's very effective. Even with fresh grain right next to it, rodents prefer Rodent Cake."

As "worst buys" Terry nominates his **Fargo 9000** dump wagon and **Agrox** seed treatment by **Chipman, Inc.** "The dump wagon had 2 problems. It was extremely slow to dump and the cylinders that were supposed to be synchronized wouldn't stay that way two days in a row. The seed treatment, when applied as directed in the planter box, stuck to all parts of the planter but not to the seed. It quickly covered the monitor sensors so the monitor became useless until seed boxes were emptied and cleaned."

Ted Criblez, Bluffton, Ohio: "I really like the **KMN Niemeyer** power harrow as it does everything it's supposed to and has been trouble-free on thousands of acres. The problem is finding repair parts. The dealer and distributor have gone out of business and the importer's either moved or gone out of business. I'd like to find somebody who has a used one for sale."

"My **Craftsman** cordless 3/8-in.

drill/screwdriver is best buy. Recharges in 1 hr. or less, goes anywhere, and has plenty of torque. I use it almost every day."

Robert B. Boyd, Grand Junction, Colo.: Robert had trouble with a **1985 Winnebago** recreational vehicle. "It was delivered with a slow leaking tire, the right hand door lock fell out the first time used, the windshield leaked during the first rain, and every hanger on the exhaust system broke during the first 2,500 miles. We had \$298 in air conditioner repairs and a complete electrical burn-out in the engine compartment up to and including the ignition switch at under 6,000 miles. The electrical system burned out again after we repaired it, also burning the overflow gas tank, turbo supercharger, starter, and starter solenoid. When we got it back again after 120 days of repair work, a loose fitting on an exhaust pipe melted the plastic wiper fluid tank and the battery overcharged, causing it to burn out and require replacement. The new battery failed in less than 50 miles. Winnebago could not supply an electric schematic. There are several other problems with the vehicle. The one good feature about it is that it's the easiest starting engine I've ever had in cold weather."

Charles Rockwell, Jefferson, Wis.: "Lets me mow our 2-acre lawn in about half the time it took with a tractor-type mower. Lots of power, good for trimming around trees, and it cuts smooth without windrowing grass," says Charles pleased with his **1985 Dixon ZTR** lawn mower.

He's unhappy with a set of **1986 Michelin** tires. "Two of them were slow leakers when new. The dealer finally got one stopped and I put a tube in the other one myself. It cost \$25 to get those two tires to stop leaking."

Frank Dhamers, Geneseo, Ill.: "My best buy is a **Honda Big Red**. It's great for doing chores, chasing livestock and running from field to field. Now I never have to wait for a ride back home to make repairs."

Dennis Hoffman, Wilmont, Minn.: "We put a **Tiger Jaws** cutterbar on our combine last fall and we are really pleased with it," says Dennis about the cutterbar from the **Herschel Corp.**, Indianola, Iowa. "It cuts close, reduces shatter, and increases ground speed to keep the cylinder full. It also works good on short beans. The bar showed very little wear after one season."

Dennis says his **International 1150** grinder-mixer equipped with a scale is also a "best buy". "I know that when I need a load of feed I'll get it done in 20 min. It works all the time and I haven't had a thing go wrong with it."

Glen R. Hochstedler, Wakarusa, Ind.: "I use this feeder auger to move high moisture corn and concentrate which has been processed through a roller mill. It was rated at 50 ft. but we are going 80 ft. with no problems," says Glen, pleased with his **Brock 125** flex auger. "We're also pleased with our **Steiner 80** cu. ft. feed mixer bought in 1983. It does a very good job mixing with only a 1 hp. motor."