

Best & Worst Buys

(Continued from previous page)

"My **Zetor** is the best tractor for its size that I've ever owned and the people who sell them are great. I'd recommend this tractor to anyone."

Ben N. Smith, Plymouth, Ind.: "It's by far the best buy I've made in years," says Ben about his 1993 **Case-IH 1840** skidsteer loader equipped with a 50 hp Cummins diesel engine. "This machine has power to spare and won't back off from any job."

William J. Rietveld, Chicago Hts., Ill.: "My best buy this year was a **Crary Air Reel**. It's the best way to get both short and tall soybeans. There are absolutely no beans lost at the cutterbar. I have the reel mounted on a **Case/IH 1640** combine and feel it has paid for itself in one season."

Mrs. Tom Probst, West Liberty, Iowa: "I love my husband's new 1997 **Chevrolet 2500 4-WD** extended cab pickup. We have two young children for which the extra cab space is great. The truck handles nicely and the cab is very quiet. It's easy to see out of and manage in traffic. We use it to pull a stock trailer, which it handles easily."

Don Blake, Cherokee, Iowa: "My worst buy in an automobile in 65 years has to be our 1994 **Chrysler Concorde**. The excessive wind noise around the doors and windows, as well as the road noise, is very tiring. We've taken it back to the dealer four times and contacted Chrysler Corp. but nothing has been done about it. My brother bought one at the same time and has had the same problem."

Coy G. Cleveland, Paradise, Tex.: "I'm very pleased with my 1987 **Ford 5610** tractor. Excellent hydraulics and a good, roomy cab with good heat and air. However, with the power that it has, it needs a little bigger cooling system. Works fine in ideal conditions, but we have problems if a little trash collects on the tractor when temps are 90° or higher."

David Allmendinger, Shipperville, Penn.: "My 1996 **New Idea 272** 'Cuttidioner' is my best buy. Last year I used it to cut 80 acres with no problems. I'm well pleased with it."

Arvin G. Reu, Luverne, Minn.: "My 1993 **Kuhn 3-pt.**, pto-driven Gyro rake does a good job fluffing hay for faster drying. It doesn't 'rope' the hay which results in more even feeding into the baler, especially with grass hay. I like being able to pick up and clear end rows and then set them back down. It allows me to cut my raking time by one third. I can rake hay in any direction and get a clean sweep."

Kenneth Stull, Ethel, Mo.: A 1995 **MTD Ranch King 12** hp, 38-in. riding mower rates as Kenneth's "best buy". "I hope that it'll last as long as the 1971 **AMF** model that I had before. No problems so far."

Edward Mann, Wilkie, Sask.: "My 1993 **White 6145** front wheel assist tractor is fuel efficient, has a lot of power, and is easy to service. It always works good and doesn't use any oil."

Cornie Van Lant, Chandler, Minn.: Cornie likes his 1996 **Dodge Ram 1500 4-WD** pickup. "I've owned five different Dodge pickups over the years and have had great luck with all of them. However, this model is the best one yet. It's fuel efficient, too."

Donald H. Petersen, Sebeka, Minn.:

Donald's impressed with his 1996 **Tradesman 8350 15-in.** bench scroll saw. "After I used it for about two hours a connecting link broke so I called the company's toll-free number. They sent out a new part right away and installed it. I've used it a lot since then with no problems."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1996 **Harbor Freight 16-in.** bench top scroll saw. "I had used it for only about two hours when the start-stop switch started acting up so I tried to get a new switch. I was told none were available so I returned the saw and got my money back."

A.M. Clark, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario: "My 1994 **Husqvarna Weed Eater** is my best buy. It always starts and will operate non-stop, hour after hour, without heating up. I use a 4-tooth blade on it to cut cattails, etc., and a conventional blade to cut brush."

Harvey Fender, Assiniboia, Sask.: Harvey likes his 1978 **Big Bud 360** hp tractor which he bought used 14 years ago. "We farm more than 5,000 acres and this tractor is our main power unit for pulling 59-ft. toolbar-mounted implements. No major problems. The air conditioner and radio still work, and the cab is quieter than the cabs on most newer tractors. Also, it rides like an old Cadillac. What more could I want?"

Ian Heatwole, Weyers Cave, Va.: Ian likes his 1978 **Massey-Ferguson 550** combine but says it has nevertheless had some problems. "It does a good job threshing and

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will easily outperform competing combines. However, it unloads slow and the unloading auger doesn't reach high enough to allow dumping into a semi tractor trailer. Routine maintenance is a pain. For example, there's no fast, easy, way to adjust the rear concave. Also, the lower 'frame' of the combine is built rather weak. When I jack up the front of the combine, I have to be careful where I place the jack in order to keep from cracking the frame. The radiator air intake clogs up easily, the engine doesn't start in cold weather, and I have to replace the starter every two years or so. I use the company's 1143 corn head with it and it's one of the best I've ever seen. If I were in the market for a new combine I'd buy a **New Holland** model. New Holland combines have comfortable cabs with easy-to-reach controls and are powered by the Genesis engine. My New Holland 8970 tractor has the same engine and it's a great one."

Marshall Rush, Pine Bluff, Ark.: "I'm impressed with my 1996 **Sunflower 30-ft.** no-till grain drill. It's easy to set the depth control exactly where I want it. Also, this drill is just extremely tough."

Edward Niemiller, Columbus, Ind.: "Our best buy is our 1971 **Ford 4000** tractor equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine. We used it hard for 20 years and then retired, but we still use it to mow land that isn't in row crops. It has more than 12,000 hours

on it but it still works great."

Stuart Oberg, Slayton, Minn.: A 1995 **Easy Walker** bean buggy rates as Stuart's "best buy" (B & D Mfg., Moorland, Iowa). "I can cover four rows at a time by holding a spray wand in each hand. It's equipped with an 'inching pedal' which lets me go very slow. The transmission has five forward gears and one reverse. It's a low-cost machine that's inexpensive to maintain. I paid about \$1,500 for it and spent another \$700 or so for the second wand and for a radio, tank, and umbrella. I just love this piece of equipment."

"I can cover four rows at a time by holding a spray wand in each hand."

Dean Taylor, Blissfield, Mich.: "It does an excellent job of flipping and fluffing windrows and handles them gently," says Dean, pleased with his 1994 **New Holland 166** windrow-inverter.

Robert C. Tillman, Carthage, Ill.: Last year Robert bought a used 1993 **Crustbuster 3400 22-ft.** no-till grain drill and says it's his "best buy". "I'm well pleased with it. The depth control and down pressure are easy to adjust, and it plants accurately. I've used it on soybeans, wheat, oats, and alfalfa."

Craig C. Noring, West Liberty, Iowa: "My 1976 **Rounder 700** skidsteer loader is built strong and always starts even in temperatures as low as 30 degrees below zero (Oakes Mfg., Oakes, N. Dak. 58474). All the components on it are easy to service, and even though the company has been sold three times parts are still easy to get. We use it hard. I added **Versa** teeth to the bucket and really like them (Fisher Mfg., Box 118, New Paris, Ohio 45347)."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists a **Lester** building. "One of the post holes was dug too deep so the pole is 4 in. lower than it should be, causing the building to sag. Two other poles are out of plumb so the door won't open and close correctly. The company refuses to pay for even half the cost of having a competent contractor come out and correct the mistakes."

Kenan Drebenstedt, Mediapolis, Iowa: Kenan owns a 1991 **Bush Hog 1445** disk and says it's his "best buy". "I enjoy using it and never have any problems getting it into the ground. It works especially well on corn stalks and cuts right through the heaviest residue."

Arnold Mittelstaedt, Reardan, Wash.: Arnold likes his 1982 **International 1460** combine but says it could use a couple of improvements. "Some of the controls are poorly designed. I installed the company's squirrel cage fan update which improved capacity by about 20 percent."

Gerald R. Kandell, Clark Lake, Mich.: "Our best buy of all time is my 1953 **Ferguson TO 30 34** hp tractor equipped with a 3-pt. hitch. By a farmer's standards this tractor is worthless, but we get \$100 every time we use it to do grading work around pole barns under construction. We also use it to do backhoe work. We use a manually-operated **Kelly** loader on it. Hardly a day goes by that we don't use this tractor for something. We paid \$2,300 for it. We also have three other Ferguson TO 30's. We buy them at auctions."

Norbert Kanzler, Chateaugay, N.Y.:

"I like my 1995 **Ford F-350** extended body van equipped with a diesel engine. It's easy on fuel, rides comfortably, and accelerates well. The extended body provides a lot of room for bagged feed."

Jim Hadwiger, Cherokee, Okla.: Jim owns a 1988 **Case-IH 7140** tractor. "It has a lot of comfort and power, but I wish the power steering system worked better so that it would be a little easier to turn. One problem is that I don't have a dealer close by - I have to drive a long way to get parts. I use a **Deere 410** backhoe on it and am well satisfied with it. However, I wish I could raise it higher - I can stack bales only three high."

Douglas D. Aho, Virginia, Minn.: "My best buy ever is a 1985 **Chevrolet S-10** pickup equipped with a 2.5-liter 4-cyl. engine and 5-speed transmission. It has 237,000 miles and is still going strong. It's easy on fuel and doesn't use any oil."

Adrian Von Berkel, Antigonish, Nova Scotia: A 1970 **International Harvester 82** pull-type combine rates as Adrian's "best buy". "The price was right when we bought it three years ago. It paid for itself twice over during our first two custom jobs. We used it on our own crops as well. It still works great and we haven't spent a penny on repairs."

Jim Bennett, Burlington, Wis.: Jim's "worst buy" is a 1990 **7710 Ford** tractor that he bought in 1991.

"It was a leased tractor that I bought with only 327 hours and with the remainder of the warranty intact. The tractor's been a problem from day one. Almost as soon as it was delivered, I discovered the hydraulic remotes didn't work. So much for fall plowing. Next, the rear main seal went out of the engine. Those two problems were fixed promptly by the dealer, Converse Equipment at Whitewater, under warranty. Soon after that, however, the engine developed a vibration that shook a plug out of the intake manifold. That, in turn, caused the intake to suck in dirt which, in turn, caused the engine to use a lot of oil. The dealer brought me a new plug right away but that didn't stop the vibration problem. I've been round and round with the dealer for almost three years on this problem and it remains unresolved. Now the warranty has expired."

Larry Janssens, Wallaceburg, Ontario: "Our best buy is our 1995 **Persall Mini-Tiler 3-pt.** drainage plow (Persall Mini-Tiler Ltd., Rt. 1, Waterford, Ontario, Canada). We used it to install about 220,000 ft. of 4-in. dia. tile 36 in. deep. We used our **Deere 4455 MFWD** tractor to pull it. Very few problems."

Burton Somerville, Stayner, Ontario: Burton's pleased with his **Case-IH 5130** Maxxum tractor. "It has about 3,000 hours on it and has never been back to the dealer. We do all the maintenance work in our shop. The cab has good visibility and a comfortable seat which makes it a pleasure to drive."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his **Hardi** computerized sprayer. "Parts are hard to get in our area since the local dealer went out of business. If we can find parts they're overpriced, and no one is available to repair the computer."

William G. Jakes, Murfreesboro, Tenn.: "My 1994 **Wood-Mizer** portable band mill is my best buy ever. It's extremely accurate and simple to use, and it does everything the company said it would and more. I'd recommend it to anyone."

"My **McCulloch** chain saw is my worst buy. Bar oil got in the motor which caused the saw to smoke so bad that I could hardly see. My dealer gave me a new McCulloch and it's the best saw I've ever owned."