

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Delwin Gates, Mohall, N. Dak.: Delwin's had good luck with his 1986 **Versatile** 1156 tractor and also with a 1991 **Ford-Versatile** 1156 tractor that he bought used last year. "These tractors are real work horses. Both originally had about 470 hp. However, we modified the engines to boost them both up to 525 hp. They burn 12 to 14 gal. of fuel per hour. We use them to pull 62-ft. Flexicoil 800 air seeders. Tractor manufacturers should start selling tractors with big engines again. We've owned several **Versatile** tractors with 855 cu. in. engines and they worked good, but you can't keep building up an engine and expect it to last. Why not make tractors with bigger engines so that you can turn them down in order to save fuel and to make them run easier, or at least make bigger engines optional? We won't trade down to the new 400 to 425 hp tractors - we'll rebuild tractors first."

Art Lamping, Humboldt, Sask.: Art has 536,000 miles on his 1980 **Ford F-250** 4-WD pickup with automatic transmission. "We've had to replace the transmission twice and overhauled the engine at 270,000 miles. It does have some rust. We use it to pull an 18-ft. stock trailer and a 20-ft. flatbed trailer, and to haul hay bales and a 1,000-gal. water tank. An all-time best buy."

electric saw to cut silage and dry round bales in half inside my barn (Jarvis Industries, 3915 78th Ave. S.E., Bay A, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2C 2J6). The blade moves back and forth about 1 in. and works like an electric bread knife. It's the best rig I've found yet to cut round bales. I like it so much that I became a dealer."

On the minus side, he lists his **Bale Ease** round bale grapple fork. "The grapple hinge pins didn't have any bushings so the holes where the pins go through got worn and expanded. It got so bad that after three years it couldn't even pick up a bale anymore. I had to rebuild it and put in new bushings and pins."

Matthias Pertschy, Notre Dame de Stanbridge, Quebec: "Our **Deere** 12-row 7300 planter equipped with a vacuum metering system is my worst buy. It has trouble keeping an even planting population whenever I go more than 5 mph. We were assured by the dealer and by the operator's manual that it would plant accurately at speeds of up to 7 mph or more."

Robert H. Schoger, Big Rock, Ill.: "One of my best buys ever is my **Sanders** Seed-Vayor pneumatic bulk seed handling system for filling planters or grain drills (Sanders Seed-Vayor Co., 45 Bushnell Road, Plano, Ill. 60545 ph 708 355-0335). It's powered by the tractor's hydraulic system and is designed to move seed out of any bulk tank at 2 1/2 to 3 bu. per minute. Works with anything. The hydraulically-driven rotary airlock and blower are reliable and maintenance free. It has a 35-ft. long hose so I can reach all the planter seed boxes without having to move any equipment."

Erling Swiggum, Dodgeville, Wis.: "My best buy is my **Mueller** 1,000-gal. bulk milk tank. It cools the milk soon after I'm done milking and also automatically stirs it every hour or so. I seldom if ever have to manually wash it."

Dale Spoerl, Elizabeth, Ill.: "My **Hesston** 1160 haybine is my worst buy. It has poor tires and poor hydraulic hoses. I can't see the sicklebar so I can't tell when there's a plug-up. Unplugging it is a horrible job. Years ago I owned a **Hesston** PT10 haybine that was engineered much better. I put about 6,000 acres through it."

Bruce Dodds, Green, Kan.: Bruce nominates his 1983 **Deere** 4250 tractor as his "best buy". "The Sound-Gard cab is quiet and comfortable and the engine runs good. It has 4,900 hours on it. I plan to have it overhauled at 5,000 hours. Some teeth have broken on the ring and pinion gear which could be due to operator error although I wonder if anyone else has had this problem. The tractor handles nice but uses more fuel than the **Case** 1070 that I owned previously."

"I modified an **Oliver** 1610 front-end loader so I could mount it on my **Deere** 2940 tractor. It's a light-duty loader so numerous cracks have developed in the frame and loader arms. It has a narrow bucket but that's not much of a problem because I use a bale fork on it most of the time. It'll get me by until I can afford a better loader."

Ron Kalkowski, Ogallala, Neb.: "One of our best buys is our **Kinze** 640 grain cart. We've used it a lot to haul wheat, corn, millet, sunflowers, popcorn, etc. It doesn't leak any grain or cause damage to it. No problems at all."

Dale E. Nielson, Chapman, Neb.: Dale's the pleased owner of a **Buffalo** 6300 12-row cultivator equipped with a flat fold bar and dual lift assist wheels. "It does an excellent job of cultivating and ridging on

Leon Walchuk, Melville, Sask.: Leon's pleased with his 1988 **Versatile** 936 4-WD tractor equipped with a Cummins 855 cu. in. engine and 12-speed standard transmission, but recommends a couple improvements. "I'd like to see a better way to run the wiring back to our air seeder - the holes are too small to run the plugs through. Also, I wish the monitor was mounted in a different place."

Jack Porter, Goose Creek, S.C.: "I've had good luck with my 1993 **Deere** LX178 riding mower equipped with a water-cooled engine. It has done a lot of cutting and has gone through two decks. The tractor itself is like new. It's my best buy."

"My 1990 **Ford** F-150 pickup is my worst buy. It's had electrical problems and now the paint is peeling off. The dealer wouldn't help and the company won't help pay for the cost of repainting it. I think my next pickup just might be a **Dodge**."

Norm Burgess, Sandy, Ore.: "It's done everything I expected it to and much more, with no problems," says Norm about his **Massey-Ferguson** 1250 tractor equipped with a backhoe and front-end loader.

Raymond Alexander, Fredericton-Junction, New Brunswick: Raymond's impressed with the 1996 **Houle** Magnum hydraulic manure pump that he uses in his barn. "It's virtually plug-proof and can handle all types of manure. It'll even pump water. We liked it so much that we installed another one last year in our other barn."

"I use a **Jarvis** hand-held reciprocating