

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

Eugene P. Lee, Bigfork, Mont.: Eugene’s “worst buy” is his 1996 **Deere** 5500 4-WD tractor equipped with a 540 front-end loader. “I special ordered it from the factory last May. I soon learned that my old 1948 Deere 2-cyl. ‘B’ has a better hydraulic system than this tractor. The loader won’t stay up. One time I hooked up to a field cultivator and drove toward the field a half mile away, but the shovels dropped and dug into the road twice before I got there. When I was in the field I had to raise the cultivator every few minutes in order to keep it from digging too deep. When I used it to mow roadside ditches I couldn’t keep the sicklebar out of the dirt.

“The company told me it’s normal for the hydraulics to drop this way and wouldn’t do anything to help. At my insistence, the company took the tractor back and I bought a new 6300 which has exactly two horsepower more than the 5500. It works okay. However, it cost me \$6,864 to get two extra horsepower.”

He’s had better luck with his 1994 **Deere** 338 small square baler. “I’ve used it to make more than 25,000 bales with no problems. It’s easy to service and to clean up. The only time it misses a bale is if we tie a poor knot between balls of twine.”

J. E. Chizek, Cuba, Kan.: “I use my **Crustbuster** 15-ft. 10-in. hoe drill to plant soybeans and milo in six 30-in. rows and also to plant wheat, oats, and alfalfa. No problems. My neighbors often borrow it.

“I’ve used my 1987 **Gleaner** 65 C-2 combine to cut about 400 acres a year for the past nine years. Very few problems.

“I like my 1978 **Ford** F-150 4-WD pickup which I bought used nine years ago. It has 197,000 miles on it but the 400 cu. in. engine is only now starting to use a little oil - a quart every 500 or 600 miles.”

Edward Dugan, Montrose, Mo.: Edward’s the owner of a **Deere** 530 round baler. “We’ve used it for nine years and have made about 14,000 bales with it, yet it still has the original belts.

“Our **Deere** twin hydraulic rake is a pleasure to use. It helps us make solid bales with hard, slick ends.”

Coy V. Prokup, Porum, Okla.: A 1993 **Dodge** Ram 250 pickup equipped with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine rates as Coy’s “best buy”. “It has almost 150,000 miles on it but still doesn’t use any oil. It gets 25 to 26 1/2 mpg. The only problem was when the odometer sensor went out. It really has a lot of pulling power, especially on hills.”

Dale Shipley, Chickasha, Okla.: “One of my best buys ever is my **Case-IH** 9250 tractor. I really like the transmission - no problems after 2,300 hours of use.

“My **Case-IH** 1666 combine has a lot of capacity and is easy on fuel. I use it with a **Shelbourne Reynolds** stripper header and can cut 40 bu. per acre (or more) wheat at 9 mph without overloading the combine.

“I’ve had good luck with my **Case-IH** 8312 disc mower-conditioner. I can run it as fast as ground conditions permit.

“I like my **Mayrath** 8 by 54-ft. auger with swingaway hopper. The tractor always stays in line with the auger and the auger is equipped with hydraulic lift so it’s quick and easy to handle at the bin.

“My 1995 **Dakota** 22-ft., 650-bu. grain trailer is a best buy. It’s a heavy-built rig that unloads fast.”

Bill Mitchell, Earlville, Ill.: “We bought an **International** 806 tractor in 1970 with 2,000 hours on it. We’ve put a new clutch on it and we overhauled the engine at 8,000 hours. It now has about 11,000 hours on it but still runs better than some of our newer tractors.

“We bought a 1992 **Ford** Ranger pickup equipped with a 4-cyl. **Mazda** engine and it’s a worst buy. The engine used about a quart of oil every 1,000 miles when it was new and it never got good gas mileage. At 60,000 miles we traded it off.”

John A. Wicke, Jr., Nixon, Texas: John likes his 1994 **Dodge** 2500 pickup equipped with a 350 cu. in. engine and automatic overdrive transmission but says it has had some problems. “It has a lot of power and drives well on the highway. However, as soon as you leave the pavement the ride leaves something to be desired. I was told by the dealer that it’s a farm pickup, but he forgot to deliver all the extras - like the spurs that are needed to ride it in a pasture.”

Joe Thomas, Mattson, Miss.: “Two years ago we bought a **Case-IH** 2155 cotton picker and it’s a best buy. Cotton pickers have a lot of moving parts so you normally expect to have some breakdowns. But in two years all we’ve had to do is change the oil and grease it.

“Our 1994 **Bowman** rope wick applicator is our worst buy. It’s equipped with two electric pumps that pump solution through

Linwood Thompson, Tenants Harbor, Maine: “In a recent issue I nominated my 1991 **Deere** 1070 tractor as my best buy. However, it does have one annoying feature. The loader control lever is positioned too close to the driver’s seat and if you have a big butt like me - I’m 6-ft. 1-in. tall and weigh 240 lbs. - and turn around to your left to see what’s going on behind you, you can accidentally hit the lever without knowing it. The next thing you know the loader is down and digging into the ground. The lever should be positioned to the right and front of the operator, next to the hand throttle.

“I’ve had to replace the anti-rattle clips three times on my 1986 **Ford** F-250 pickup which is equipped with a 6.9-liter diesel engine. It has over 83,000 miles on it and has been fairly trouble-free except for a bad paint job on the hood and top of the cab where the paint has completely peeled off. The company won’t pay to have it repainted, even though between 1984 and 1988 my wife and I bought three vehicles from the same dealer at a total cost of more than \$45,000.”

Adolph Breitenbach, Grand Prairie, Texas: Adolph’s “best buy” is his 1994 **GM** Sonoma SLS extended cab pickup equipped with a 4.3-liter 6-cyl. engine. “It’s a joy to drive and has power windows, power door locks, a tilt steering wheel, and cruise control. It has almost 50,000 miles with hardly any problems. Comfortable seats and handy controls.”