

Best & Worst Buys

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company several times to no avail. After two months I traded it in for a second unit which also failed to start due to an improper pop-off valve. I'll never buy another product from this company again."

On the "best buy" side, "My 1995 **GateWay** 2000 desktop personal computer is easy to set up and the operator's manual is clear and well-written. It has worked great right from the start."

Adam N. Zimmerman, East Earl, Penn.: "I'm a farmer and an artificial insemination technician. In 1989 I bought a new **Toyota** 4-WD pickup to make my service calls. It now has more than 265,000 miles on it but still doesn't use any oil. I replaced the clutch at 217,000 miles. The engine has never been overhauled and the pickup still looks like new. I wish American-made pickups were as dependable as this one."

Don P. Linn, Damascus, Ark.: "We've had problems with a company called **Stockade, Inc.** Last May they delivered a C.O.D. package to our residence. Our daughter paid the \$269.85 due, thinking that we had forgotten to tell her about the order. Upon our arrival home we opened the package and found three 1-gal. bottles of a herbicide called Triple Threat. We didn't order the product and didn't want it so we placed a stop payment on the check. Since then the company has called us repeatedly, usually early in the morning. So far, all this scam has cost us is \$20.60 to stop the check."

Hugh Dudley, Albion, N.Y.: Hugh doesn't like his 1992 **Deere** 750 15-ft. no-till drill which he bought used two years ago. "The problem is that it has 125 grease fittings and all of them are almost impossible to reach. I have to crawl under the drill between the ranks of openers. The same is true for the depth adjustments on the seed openers. Every time I have to service this machine I cuss the engineers who designed it. Also, the seed tubes plug up easily. I'm surprised that Deere even put its name on this machine."

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Ed Swanson, Minnesota Department of Transportation, St. Paul, Minn.: A 1992 **Ford-New Holland** 9030 bi-directional tractor owned by the Department of Transportation burned up in June while it was being used to mow a freeway median near Sandstone, Minn.

"Luckily, an alert motorist noticed the fire and called the local fire department on his cell phone. The fire was out in less than 25 minutes. In that short time, however, the cab was completely gutted, all inside duals were destroyed, as was all the wiring, batteries and hydraulic lines. It was a total loss," Swanson says. "The state fire marshal says it was a battery cable, just as I suspected. It's the second DOT tractor to catch fire. The first was a 1992 276 that burned up in the fall of 1993 (see Vol. 17, No. 6). The company was good about the first tractor fire,

paying \$45,000 to replace it. In this case, because the tractor was four years old and had 1,500 hours on it, a settlement may be harder to agree on."

Clarence Engelken, Seneca, Kan.: "My best buy is my 1989 **Chevrolet** 350 extended cab pickup. It has over 232,000 hard-driven miles with only routine maintenance. It rides and drives better than a lot of cars and gets 17 to 18 mpg, and it doesn't use any oil."

Wid S. Keeling, Rising Star, Texas: Wid's the owner of a 1992 **New Holland** 650 baler. "It makes good tight bales but I've had a lot of problems with the bearings. One time I had to wait nine days for parts. It cost me a \$9,000-a-year custom baling job. I bought a new **New Holland** 488 swather and so far it has been trouble-free."

George R. Thomas, Radnor, Ohio: "Our best buy is a 1994 **New Idea** 9600 6-row no-till corn planter equipped with a 5-row soybean splitter. It's a heavy, well-built planter. It spaces seed more accurately than any other planter I've ever owned."

"Our **Salzsieder** 300-bu. "no stick" round bottom gravity wagon is a best buy (David Salzsieder, N735 Schultz Road, Denmark, Wis. 54208 ph 414 776-1446). I had the company build it for me after reading about it in **FARM SHOW** (Vol. 18, No. 3). It consists of a semi-circular shaped steel box that slopes down to one side. It's built strong and always empties out clean, even in wet corn."

Marvin R. Patterson, Shelbyville, Ky.: "I like my 1994 **New Holland** and 1995 **Badger** variable speed discharge silage wagons. Both are built by Badger and both work great. They're identical except that they have different tops. I like the top on the **New Holland** model better because it's built stronger and handles tree limbs better. "My **Patz** 40-ft. inclined conveyor is built solid but I've had problems with it from the start. It had a poly bottom that I had to remove, the chain often broke, and it didn't run smooth. I used it only for about two years."

Bill Armstrong, Hermleigh, Texas: "I haven't had any problems with my two 1987 **Kawasaki** 300 Bayou 4-wheeler ATVs. I use them on our ranch to build fence, do chores, herd cattle, go hunting, etc. I wish everything I owned performed as well as these ATVs."

On the minus side, Bill nominates his 1987 **Sears Craftsman** riding mower as "worst buy". "The engine and deck work okay but the gears in the transaxle went out twice and it took over a year to get repair parts. After the first repair I was able to use it only twice before the gears broke again. I'll never buy a Sears again. My next mower will have hydrostatic drive - no more transaxles for me."

Ronald H. McConnell, Brookville, Penn.: Ronald likes his 1992 **Belarus** 525M 4-WD 65-70 hp tractor. "It's one of the joys of my life. All it has needed are oil changes and lubrication. No fancy fluids - just gear oil and motor oil. The 289 cu. in. engine and front wheel drive work flawlessly on my hilly ground, and the 3-pt. has a lot of down pressure. I mounted a **Kelly** front-end loader on it. I bought the tractor at **North-ern Hydraulics** and saved \$3,000 compared to what I would have paid at my local dealer.

I'd buy another one in a minute."

Jeffrey G. Webster, West Suffield, Conn.: "I've used my 1979 **Stihl** 041 chain saw to cut about 30 cords per year. It finally needed a new drive sprocket this year. It always starts on the third or fourth pull."

Lloyd J. Slemmon, Bowmanville, Ontario: "Over the years we've had good luck with our **Deere** tractors including a 2130 equipped with a 48 front-end loader, 2750 2-WD equipped with a 148 loader, and 2950 4-WD equipped with a 268 loader. We still use our old **Deere** 60 and 520 models. We also like our **Deere** 430 round baler and our **New Holland** haybine."

On the negative side, "I worked part-time for a local tree nursery driving various types of tractors, and I think the worst tractor I drove was a **Case-IH** 1390. It was one of the first models the company made after Case and International joined. A lot of little things went wrong on it. It had great traction but continually leaked oil and had poor hydraulics."

Wayne L. Wilber, Hamshire, Texas: Wayne's impressed with his 1993 **Shelbourne Reynolds** stripper header. "It lets us start harvesting rice two hours earlier in the morning than we could with a conventional header and keep going an hour later in the evening. No problems."

"My worst buy is a 1994 **Chevrolet** K-2500 truck with a 6.5-liter turbocharged diesel engine. The number 8 cylinder went bad when the truck had 115,000 miles but it had

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a 100,000 mile warranty so I had to pay the repair cost. The company refused to help. Two Chevy dealers told me that this is a common problem on the 6.5-liter engine."

Mike Stewart, Charleston, Ill.: "I like my 1994 **Deere** 425 all wheel steer riding mower. It runs good and cuts great. It's in a class by itself."

Dan Allred, Corydon, Iowa: "My best buy is my **DeWalt** 14-volt rechargeable 3/8-in. drill equipped with a keyless chuck. It has a lot of power and the battery lasts a long time - almost a half day with the usage I give it. An adjustable drive clutch lets me control how tight I put the screws in. It takes only about an hour to recharge the battery."

C.L. Paul, Jr., Custer, Wash.: He's pleased with his **Deutz-Allis** 7085 4-WD tractor. "It shifts smoother than any other tractor I've ever owned. We use it to stack silage. My only complaint is that the loader lift cylinders and the hydraulic reservoir are too small."

"My **Hesston** 555 round baler is my worst buy. I worked with the dealer for three years trying to resolve some of the problems I had with it. He did his best but the company wouldn't help. He finally replaced it with a **New Holland** 644 baler."

Ransom Myers, Lula, Miss.: "My worst buy is a new **Deere** 455 35-ft. grain drill equipped with 7 1/2-in. row spacing and V-type closing wheels. The problem is that the shoes that hold the disc openers and closing wheels break easily. We can go for only a few hours without breaking down. Most of the shoes have been rewelded. The company won't do anything to help even though I own 10 Deere tractors and most of

my other equipment is made by Deere."

Tanya Cullum, Waskom, Texas: "My **Bush Hog** 4610 15-ft. mower is my best buy. I've worked it hard but it just keeps on going."

"My 1995 **Deere** 6400 2-WD tractor equipped with a front-end loader is my worst buy. I've had problems with the hydraulics, steering, clutch, etc. This tractor has cost me more money on repairs than it could ever make back in the field."

Zenas Shildt, Mercersburg, Penn.: "Our 1994 **Martin** 8-ft. silage bagger packs well and makes a smoother bag of haylage than any other bagger I've seen. It works great and costs only about two thirds as much as other popular baggers."

"We like our 1995 **Deere** 930 12-ft. mower-conditioner. It mows and dries hay faster than the **New Holland** 489 mower-conditioner we previously owned. Works great."

Wesley E. Delk, Balko, Okla.: "I like my 1994 **Polaris** 400 4-wheeler ATV. It must be good - my wife uses it so much I never get a chance to ride it."

"Our best buy 1994 **Bobcat** 225G welder has never failed to start, even in cold weather. It does a great job of welding and the generator is handy."

Jack Hennen, Ghent, Minn.: Jack's pleased with his 1994 **Case-IH** 5230 tractor equipped with a **Case** 520 loader. "We like the left hand reverser. It has adequate power, good visibility, fast hydraulics, and a quick-tach bucket and grapple fork. It has about 1,600 hours and has been trouble-free."

Bill McKeeman, Spruce Grove, Alberta: "My 1990 **GM Tracker** equipped with a 3-speed automatic transmission is built tough. I've put more than 125,000 miles on it and the only repairs have been to replace two valve cover gaskets and a muffler and tailpipe. I use it every day on the highway and as a 4-wheeler for hunting in the fall. It also gets a workout on the farm. It still has the original brakes and shocks."

Mark Appleford, Anatone, Wash.: "I haven't had any problems with my 1990 **Honda** 300 4-WD ATV. I think it'll run forever."

"My 1992 **Polaris** 250 4-WD ATV is a worst buy. Everything possible has gone wrong with it. I've had to replace the rear drive chain every six months, and the struts on front wore out after only a year of use. The bushings on the front suspension wore out twice in two years, and I had to overhaul the engine the second year."

James W. Trapp, Alden, N.Y.: "My 1992 **Chevrolet** C2500 pickup equipped with a 6.5-liter turbocharged diesel engine is my best buy. It has about 75,000 miles and has never been back to the dealer. It gets 18 mpg regardless of the load and is the most powerful pickup I've ever driven. I can start it without using a plug-in at temperatures down to 10 degrees below zero. It doesn't have a spot of rust on it yet."

Warren M. Lyon, Enon, Ohio: "One of my best buys ever is my 1994 **Ford** F-150 extended cab pickup equipped with a 6-cyl. engine. It has twin fuel tanks so I can drive 350 miles without having to refill. No problems and, after 20,000 miles, it looks like new. I often use it to pull a trailer and it has power to spare."

Kenneth H. Schmidt, Greensburg, Kan.: "We've used our **Deere** 4 by 2 Gator about a year now and really like its maneuverability and ease of handling. It's easy on fuel, can carry a nice load, and has a lot of power for a vehicle of this type."