

Best & Worst Buys

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to four minutes. Looks like it'll last a lifetime."

John Edwards, Bells, Tenn.: "I bought a **Redball** 8-row hooded sprayer for my no-till cotton crop that does an excellent job and is easy to operate. I use an extra gauge wheel with it to compensate for the 300-gal. spray tank that mounts on my cultivator frame."

Robert L. Litten, Columbus Grove, Ohio: "My 1985 **Honda** 'Big Red' 3-wheel ATV is my best buy. It still has the original battery which I think is incredible. It has never even been recharged. My only expense was for two new tires three years ago. It's now ready for a new front tire. It's been a real work horse. I use it to pull combine headers on the road, spread clover seed on fields, etc."

Richard Epley, Austin, Minn.: Richard's had problems with a combine head carrier made by **M.D. Products**. "On August 4, 1994, I took delivery on two of their head carriers. The owner of the company delivered them to a small town about 90 miles from my home, one loaded on the other for transport. At that time I noticed that the carriers were built on older Deere wagon running gears but they looked okay. The owner told me he bought these running gears at farm sales. I paid him and started for home. I was about 20 miles from home when the left rear wheel broke loose from the axle on the loaded carrier. I lost the axle, wheel, rim, and tire. The axle came right out of the bolster. I saw the wheel come loose in the rear view mirror but by the time I got stopped and returned to where I thought it came off I couldn't find it. I managed to limp home and called the owner to tell him about the problem. He told me that this had never happened before but that I should go ahead and repair it as needed - he would make it right. My guess is that it was an older wagon and he had failed to check the wheels for grease. The bearings got hot and froze, tearing the axle out of the bolster."

"I made the repairs which cost \$100 to \$200. I sent him photos of the carrier before and after the repair, but I didn't hear a word from him. Several months later I called him but he said he wouldn't pay for anything."

Bill Duncan, Monroe, Wis.: Bill's the satisfied owner of a 1987 **Honda** TRX 250 ATV. "I use it to pull small farm equipment, check on crops, haul calves and seed corn, etc. I also use it to do small spraying jobs and to round up cattle. I made a calf-hauling cart and a 30-gal. sprayer for it that have worked out well. I like the Honda's gear transmission better than the Polaris-type automatic transmission. This ATV's wishbone suspension provides a smoother ride than a swing arm suspension."

Bob King, Appleton, Wis.: "It's the best kept secret in the combine industry," says Bob, pleased with his **New Holland** TR86 combine. "It runs smooth and quiet and is easy to service. It does a nice job threshing and puts undamaged grain in the tank. It's almost impossible to lose any grain out the back. It's well-built and has more capacity than a Deere 8820. It also has excellent resale value."

"My **Deere** 8820 combine is my worst buy. It's too noisy, very unreliable, delivers poor quality grain, and is too big and heavy

for its capacity. It's also underpowered, hard to repair, and has poor resale value."

Ben L. Oberholtzer, Winfield, Penn.: "My best buy is a **Ford** 4600 tractor that I bought used in 1980 with 500 hours on it. Now it has over 6,000 hours and still starts and runs like new. We've had to make only minor repairs on it. I think Ford makes the best utility tractors on the market."

Vincent A. Manhart, Palestine, Ill.: Vincent likes the rotary combine cylinder bars he bought from **Loewen Mfg.** (Loewen Mfg. Co. Ltd., Box 820, Altona, Manitoba, Canada R0G 0B0). "They run one to two seasons longer than anything else we've ever used. They also run smoother and with less damage. We bought our second set last fall."

"Our **Westfield** 10-in. dia. grain auger is also a best buy. It has been virtually trouble-free."

Joseph A. Brass, Alton, Ill.: "My 1995 **Deere** 980 field cultivator does a good job. It has a lot of clearance for trash and for road travel."

Allen Johnson, Raymond, Minn.: "My best buy is my **Massey-Ferguson** 3525 front wheel assist tractor. It'll pull any of my equipment without extra weights."

Jeff Vackiner, Cody, Neb.: "The **DewEze** model 278 bale bed mounted on my 1982 Chevrolet pickup is my best buy. It's powered by an electric clutch and pump driven off the crank pulley. I have toggle



switches in the cab that operate electric-over-hydraulic valves that feed the cylinders under the bed, operating the loader arms. There's room behind a 1000-lb. caker to load, haul, and unroll two big round bales. The ease with which I can get the hay to my cows has allowed me to feed alfalfa as a protein supplement instead of cake, which cuts costs in half. I now use the caker to feed grain to my weaned calves and unroll hay for them in one trip."

"With common sense, the DewEze can be used for many everyday lifting chores, from pulling wells to loading equipment onto the bed of the pickup. The company builds a durable product and stands behind what it sells. The integrity of the company along with the quality of its equipment helped convince me to become a dealer and I've since installed many beds in Nebraska and South Dakota. The bale beds' popularity is growing because if you have to start a pickup every day, you might as well do your feeding with it and leave the tractor parked."

R. George, Gowrie, Iowa: A **Belarus** 825 front wheel assist tractor rates as his "worst buy". "After only one year and with less than 600 hours on it, it had already gone through two alternators, three clutches, a hydraulic pump, two air conditioning pumps, four front wheels, and a muffler. The tractor just wouldn't hold together. The most attractive part was the original purchase price. But the repair costs really added up.

"Those who say we should buy American made products sure can prove their point in

Leo Moreau, Phelpsston, Ontario: "My **Berg** Choremaster 400 stable cleaner is my worst buy. During the seven years I've owned it I've had to replace everything but the frame. Some parts have been replaced three times. The hold-down on the load side is built poor and wears so fast that we have to leave our swing wall chute straight."

"Our **Deutz** 6006 tractor is a best buy. It's had few repairs and has been reliable and fuel efficient for 6,300 hours. I'd buy another one if I knew it would work as good as this one."

Doug Cox, Penticon, B.C.: "I recently purchased a **Polaris** 400 c.c. ATV and am well pleased with it. It's a versatile machine that comes in handy on our ostrich farm. It has a 2-stroke engine, a transmission similar to a snowmobile, and on-demand electric 4-WD. It also has a lot of power for moving snow. I like it better than Jananese-built ATV's with gearbox transmissions and shaft drives. Also, it's made in the U.S. so I don't need a set of metric wrenches to work on it."

Dick Roley, Shelbyville, Ill.: "I'm well satisfied with my 1992 **Honda** Fourtrax 300 4-wheeler ATV. It starts quickly and easily, even in the winter. I've never had any problems at all with it. It has a powerful engine that does everything I ask it to. The headlights could be mounted on the handlebars so that when driving at night, the light would move with the handlebars instead of waiting for them to swing around with the front of the machine. I use it to move bags of seed, haul livestock out of timber during the deer hunting season, etc. I made a small trailer equipped with sidewalls for it that works great for carrying everything from chainsaws to brush to bags of seed."

J.L. Simmons, Sulphur Rock, Ark.: A **Troy-built** tiller rates as his "best buy". "I have a small garden with a lot of rocks. Trying to run a front-end tiller in these rocks would be real rough."

Charles Town, Jackson, Mich.: Charles has had a lot of problems with the paint job on his 1989 **Dodge** 1/2-ton pickup. "In the spring of 1993 I noticed a spot on top of the cab with no paint on it. I go to Florida in the winter so the pickup has never been exposed to salt. At this time it had less than 9,000 miles on it. In the summer of 1994 a lot of paint fell off on top. There was no rust under the paint and no signs that any primer paint had been used. My dealer said I'd have to make an appointment with the factory representative and bring it in and leave it overnight about 40 miles from where I live. Or, I could take the pickup to another dealer who is a lot closer. I took it there. They said they'd report the problem to the factory and let me know what could be done. They called me later and told me that the company would pay for 25% of the paint job. I said 'no way'. Now with just over 12,000 miles a lot of paint has come off the roof and below the windshield, and there are a lot of blister spots on the hood where the paint rubs off with only a touch of my finger. I've had other makes of cars and trucks that were up to 20 years old and had better paint than what's on this pickup. This is my first and last Dodge - car or truck."

Hubert Ragsdale, Wheatley, Ark.: "I'm well satisfied with my **Honda** 300 4-wheeler ATV. It's easy on fuel and is dependable. I use it a lot in my rice fields."

William Waldrup, Jacksonville, Texas: "My worst buy is my 1995 **Chevrolet** 1-ton 3500 pickup equipped with

a 454 cu. in. gas engine. The air conditioner and heater fan don't work right. The cab smells so bad at times that I have to get out of the vehicle. It has 3,400 miles."

D.L. Whiteside, Royse City, Texas: "I like my 1989 **GM** 3/4-ton heavy duty pickup equipped with a 6.2-liter diesel engine. It has 110,000 miles with few problems. It's comfortable to ride and will pull just about anything. The limited slip differential really helps - I wouldn't own a pickup without this feature. It gets about 16 mpg."

"My 1991 **Case-IH** 3309 mower-conditioner is my worst buy. While shopping around we saw several of these models with broken frames. We picked a used one that didn't have a broken frame and reinforced it before taking it to the field. The frame held up okay but we kept breaking spindles. After breaking four or five of them we found some hubs that would fit the wheels, but they had shafts that were 1/2 in. larger in diameter than the original shafts. We had a machine shop make new spindles and haven't had any problems since we made the change. Neither the dealer nor the company would help. I think White-New Idea makes them for Case-IH. They're still selling this mower with the same spindles and frame."

Norris Syverson, McIntosh, Minn.: "It uses too much fuel," says Norris, who otherwise is pleased with his 1993 **Polaris** 2-WD 250 ATV. "It's a great machine. I use it all the time to check cattle and crops and put up fencing. It has a lot of power and I like the variable speed drive transmission."

Lorne Larson, Shaunavon, Sask.: "My 1990 **Ford** F-150 pickup is okay but has uncomfortable seats that lean back too far. Also, the 351 cu. in. engine tends to heat up, and the paint quality is poor. The company should take a long look at the old 1966 **International** D-1000 pickup. It didn't cost much and was as tough as nails."

Larry Shramek, Silx, Mo.: Larry put up a pair of 30 by 72-ft. buildings made by **Cover-All Shelter** in 1994 and says they're a "best buy". "I use them to finish market hogs. They're much less expensive to build than conventional confinement buildings and require no electricity to operate. I use the same energy-free waterers and 60-bu. feeders that I was using in dirt lots. I finish groups of 140 to 180 head and they're doing as well or better than those in dirt lots. The buildings can also be used for machinery or hay storage. I use sawdust and straw for bedding."

Ken Clary, Fort Scott, Kan.: Ken's happy he bought his **Unverferth** 350-bu. grain cart. "We were looking for a way to increase the number of acres we could harvest in a day. With two IH rotary combines unloading on-the-go, we were amazed at the time saved and additional acres harvested. Also, by using a grain cart instead of an additional truck we no longer have to search for solid ground to unload."

"We also like our **Weed Eater** gas-powered leaf blower. We use it to clean out combines before moving to the next farm to avoid transporting weed seed. It also keeps the engine compartment free of dust to decrease the risk of fire."

Leon Gosser, Russell Springs, Kent.: "It's the most dependable tractor I've ever owned," reports Leon, impressed with his new **Massey-Ferguson** 240. "It starts in any weather and uses only about half as much fuel as other tractors I've owned that had only half as much power as this one. After putting on over 1,800 hours I've had to replace only the water pump and battery. No other problems at all."