

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

Arthur Buss, Hastings, Neb.: "I bought it 50 years ago when I started out farming and it's still my best buy today," says Arthur about his 1938 Deere "B" bought new in August 1937. "I paid \$732 for the tractor and had a heck of a time getting it paid for. I originally financed it through Deere at about 7% interest. My payments averaged \$150 a year.

"One year my father and I used it with a 2-bottom plow on 150 acres. We plowed night and day to finish the job. The tractor didn't have any lights, of course, so I cut holes in two cream cans and placed lanterns in them, then tied them to the rear axles to provide light. The 'B' was my main tractor for disking, plowing, and drilling until 1946.

"When I received a medical discharge from the Air Force, I bought a Deere 'A' to do our main work and built a loader for the 'B' so I could use it for chores. I still use the tractor today to move snow, operate a grain auger, and for general chores. In 1946 I converted the tractor's steel wheels to rubber which increased the tractor's power by almost one-third. The original loader was operated by levers, but the loader I now use operates on hydraulics that I installed on the tractor about 10 years ago."

Buss estimates that the tractor has about

the steering tie rod ends wore out. I was shocked when I heard that the company wanted \$450 for a new cylinder. An after-market firm sold new ones for \$568 but said they could make me a 'real deal' at \$500. Another after-market firm wanted \$350. I presume those prices didn't even include shipping and handling.

"The steering cylinder itself was in good shape so I didn't want to pay that much money for two tie rod ends just because they were welded to the cylinder. Luckily, I remembered an article I had read in FARM SHOW about a kit called **Luke's Link** for repairing tie rods on both trucks and tractors (Luke's Link, P.O. Box 466, La Junta, Colo. 81050, ph 800 962-4090). I called the company and explained my problem to owner Johnny Laucas. He said he could help me save money, and he did. I sent the measurements to him and he sent me two Luke's Links by UPS. I took them to a local mechanic who works on our trucks and he modified them slightly so they would fit. The mechanic charged \$60.50 for that and other work on the tractor. Laucas charged \$76 including freight for the two links. My total cost was \$136.50, a savings of well over \$200 compared to the lowest price that I could find anywhere else."

Jean-Guy Bissonnette, St. Polycarpe, Quebec: "My best buy is my 1990 Case-IH 7110 tractor equipped with front wheel assist. It has 2,000 trouble-free hours. The engine starts well and the cab has good visibility. My wife also drives it and likes it a lot. I'd buy another one any time."

William Davis, Sheridan, Ind.: "My Ford Lincoln Town Car runs smooth and gets 20 mpg in local driving which I think is excellent. It has a lot of power and a great engine."

Elmer Beck, Macomb, Mich.: "My 1993 Mercury Villager mini-van handles great, rides comfortably, is easy on fuel, and has great corner lights. It could be a bit longer, but that would detract from the tight turning radius."

Charles N. Nichols, Jr., Molina, Colo.: "It's easy to service and maintain and is American-made," says Charles about his "best buy" Polaris 350 4-WD ATV equipped with a liquid-cooled engine. "It's easy to service and maintain and has a lot of power. I've used it to haul 300 lbs. of salt to livestock, up grades of more than 15%."

"My 1995 International Eagle 9200 truck equipped with a 430 Detroit really works great. It has a lot of power for the mountains and on-demand 4-WD. It rides and handles great even on slick roads and is driver friendly."

Loren J. Welsh, Fennimore, Wis.: "My 1995 Deere round baler is my best buy. It lets me make hay by myself, the easy way."

Ted Hillie, Albert Lea, Minn.: "My best buy is a pull-type tile plow that I bought from Don Wurdinger of Farm Drainage Plows (909 4th St. N.W., Waverly, Iowa 50677). It lets me lay plastic tile myself fast and efficiently. Mounting the tile plow on a cart simplifies hook-up and improves control. My neighbors are impressed how fast it works. Grade control accuracy is satisfactory."

Dale Davidson, Aneroid, Sask.: Dale's happy with his 1995 Ford F-250 4-WD pickup equipped with a power stroke, turbocharged diesel engine. "It has a tremendous amount of pulling power and has been trouble-free. The diesel engine is well matched with the EOD automatic transmission. I use it to pull a 22-ft. fifth wheel live-

15,000 hours on it. It's been overhauled several times, most recently about 15 years ago.

Dale Solomon, Ellis, Kan.: "My Belarus 825 tractor is my worst buy. It leaked oil so bad all the seals had to be replaced. Now it still leaks oil. I had to spend \$900 on a new hydraulic pump, and the air conditioner went out which cost \$840 to repair. I'm on my third water pump and the heater has failed twice. I also had to pay for 25 gallons of hydraulic oil that leaked out."

Ralph J. Walker, Indiana, Penn.: "One of the best buys I've ever made was the 40-ft. wide, 64-ft. long, and 14-ft. high Agway pole building that I put up in 1990. The building crew was efficient and exact on measurements. I use the building for equipment storage and my tractors never had it so good."

On the "worst buy" side, "My 1990 International Cub Cadet 1535 15 hp riding mower has been a disappointment. The first year it was back in the dealer's shop three or four times - each time for at least two weeks. The dealer told me I didn't know how to take care of an engine. It's had three clutches, a new carburetor, a new hour meter, new battery, and a rebuilt transmission. Last year I had to put a new module in the engine. This tractor should have been painted lemon yellow."

Gus McCaslin, Jr., Inola, Okla.: "Thanks to FARM SHOW and the bright idea of a Colorado inventor, I saved more than \$200 last month in repairs on my Massey Ferguson 230 diesel tractor when