

# Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Pickups

**Michael Yarbrough, Honey Grove, Texas:** "I abuse the hound out of pickups and my 1980 Ford F-150 with 302 cu. in. V8 engine and automatic transmission has never let me down. I've pulled loaded fertilizer buggies and carried a ton - sometimes 1 1/2 tons - of feed over some mighty rough roads and it's always come through for me. It's one tough truck. But I still think some improvements could be made. For example, I wish Ford would use a simple 'no electronics' direct inject diesel engine and enough gears in the transmission to both pull big loads and get decent mileage. Perhaps, they could even offer a farmer/rancher special package that would include heavy-duty everything."

**Donald Ballagh, North Rose, N.Y.:** Donald liked his 1991 Chevrolet 4-WD Silverado with 350 cu. in. diesel and extended cab so much, he ordered a '95 with the same options. "My 1991 Silverado has 120,000 miles on it and all it has ever needed was routine maintenance. It has the most leg room in both the front and rear seats of any pickup I've ever been in. It's got a gross vehicle weight of 6,600 lbs., but easily hauls 4,000 lbs. in the bed without a lot of sagging. Mileage is good - about 16 mpg - and she's a good looker as well."

**"It has the most leg room in both the front and rear seats of any pickup I've ever been in."**

**Michael Burke, Dover Centre, Ontario:** Michael's generally well satisfied with the Toyota extended cab pickup he purchased new in 1991. He's had no problems with it in over 60,000 miles, he reports. However, he says two things need improving. "Fuel economy needs to be improved drastically. Also, it needs a slightly larger engine, at least up to a 2.8 liter."

**Duane E. Haney, Chenoa, Ill.:** "My 1994 Dodge Ram 2500 4-WD rides and drives better than my Mercury station wagon. It has ample power to pull a 31-ft. 5th wheel camper weighing over 5 tons empty. My only criticism is that when I down-shift out of cruise control, it jumps down two gears, then quickly up one. Chrysler should just leave the cruise control off altogether."

**John C. Johnson, Geronimo, Okla.:** "My 1994 Chevrolet 1500 4-WD pickup with extended cab is economical, dependable, comfortable to ride in, and attractive. On the minus side, the AM radio buzzes. I've talked to six other owners who have the same complaint."

**Joseph Swennen, Bedford, Quebec:** Joseph likes his 1993 GMC 3500 1-ton 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6.5 liter turbo diesel engine. "Neither Ford nor Dodge could offer me a 1-ton pickup that rides as smooth as my GMC."

**Robert D. Campbell, Eagle Grove, Iowa:** "My 1992 Chevrolet K-10 with 6.2 liter diesel engine gets up to 24 mpg and gives an excellent ride. I've got 33,000 trouble-free miles on it. It uses no oil."

**Eric E. Elvin, Readfield, Maine:** Eric

wants Dodge to take back his 1991 Dodge Dakota pickup. "They should melt it down and start all over. I'm only getting 13 mpg, even after a \$325 dealer tune-up. The power windows don't work and a tall person can't see out of the tinted glass."

**John Wayne Nagy, Hempstead, Texas:** The "most perfect truck ever built," John says, is the 1991 Ford F-350 dually pickup equipped with 7.3 liter diesel engine and automatic transmission with overdrive. "I've put 100,000 miles on it and have only had to replace one power door lock. I got 70,000 miles out of the first set of tires. I can get 10 mpg pulling 12,000 to 15,000 lbs. and 20 mpg on the highway."

**Gilbert Bosak, Grantsburg, Wis.:** "I'm very happy with my 1992 Chevrolet extended cab. I had two Fords before it and the first got 600 or 700 miles to a quart of oil, the next about 900 miles."

**Reno Warkentin, Blossom, Texas:** Reno's 1994 3/4-ton Dodge diesel gives him an exceptional ride, but there are a few creature inconveniences, too. "Every time you try to belt yourself in, you push the other seat belt under the seat. It's impossible to buckle up with one hand. Also, the power door locks are located poorly. I'm constantly locking myself out of my truck by accidentally brushing against the lock as I get out."

**Jim Connolley, Onoway, Alberta:** Jim nominates a 1995 Hummer diesel 4-WD as his "best ever" pickup. "It's got a durable, corrosion-resistant body and chassis. It's got incredible pulling power and carrying capacity."

**Dwight R. Robinson, Kansas, Ill.:** "I love my 1993 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 HD 4-WD pickup with 5.7 liter engine and 5-speed transmission. It averages about 14 mpg and rides like a 1/2-ton pickup. I pull 375-bu. wagons with it all fall and ammonia and seed wagons with it all spring because I don't have a 2-ton truck on my 1,000-acre grain farm. I just bought a gooseneck trailer to pull with this truck."

**George Smith, Sonnette, Mont.:** "Our 1993 Dodge diesel 250 is a good-performing truck. It could use a smoother ride and also needs higher quality paint since the original is already chipping and peeling."

**Anthony Ivey, Scott City, Kan.:** Anthony traded his 1988 Dodge Ram 50 with 116,000 trouble-free miles for a new 1993 Dodge D250 with Cummins diesel engine and club cab. He's equally as pleased with the 1993 Dodge as he was with the '88 he had before. "It's got 17,000 miles on it with no trouble yet. It gets 28 mpg and has all the power I could ever hope for. It starts great on even the coldest winter mornings. The only fault I can find is with a poor-quality paint job. The paint chips too easily."

**Chris Shauer, Ottawa, Kan.:** "Our best all-time pickup was a 1966 Ford 1/2-ton F-100 with 352 cu. in. V8 engine and club cab. My father purchased it in 1972 with 40,000 miles on it. He overhauled the engine at 100,000 miles after years of hauling up everything on the farm. We've gotten 23 years of service out of this pickup. It looks as great today as the day dad bought it. It's now got 270,000 miles on it and I suspect it'll run many more before we retire it."

**Don Rich, Oxford, Conn.:** Don's favorite pickup is his 1994 Ford Super Duty 4-

WD equipped with a 460 cu. in. engine and 5-speed transmission with 2-speed auxiliary transmission. "It's more powerful than any other pickup I've ever driven. It's fuel efficient with the auxiliary transmission, which helps make it the best vehicle I've ever used for towing. My only complaint is that I wish Ford would offer a black interior."

**Barbara Gattis, Cedar Creek, Texas:**

**"We've gotten 23 years of service out of this pickup. It looks as great today as the day my dad bought it."**

"My 1993 1-ton Ford pickup equipped with a 7.3 liter diesel engine has been nothing but trouble. The steering system is a problem and it has no pulling power. I'm dissatisfied with almost everything about it. On the other hand, my 9-year-old Chevrolet pickup has tons of miles on it and I've never had one major problem with it."

**Don Martin, Tangent, Ore.:** Don bought a new 1994 Nissan pickup and believes it'll perform as well as the 1981 Nissan he owned previously. "It's got 339,000 miles on it and I still use it every day."

**Gary Bruning, Ellsworth, Kan.:** Gary's disappointed with his 1991 Ford F-350 4-WD equipped with 7.3 liter diesel engine as compared with the 1984 Ford F-250 4-WD. "Mileage isn't nearly as good as with my '84, which had a 6.9 liter diesel. It's doggy and doesn't start as easily when it's cold either."

**Al Plumleg, Crown Point, Ind.:** "I'm absolutely 100 percent satisfied with my 1994 GM Sierra Z-71 4-WD with extended cab. It's roomy, powerful enough to haul big loads, and looks great. Plus, the dealer has been pretty good about service. I bought it 13 months ago and have put 42,000 miles on it. It hasn't missed a day of work."

**Allen Nohl, Sheboygan Falls, Wis.:** Allen's happy with his 1995 Ford F-250 4-WD. "It does what I need it to do. It has a great ride and a lot of power."

**K.M. Wise, Rockyford, Alberta:** "I'm well satisfied with my 1992 GM Yukon, except for their 'chip guard' paint which doesn't guard - it chips. GMC, Canada, didn't have the courtesy to respond to my letter of complaint. My dealer was told by the company it wasn't covered by warranty. I've been a GM owner for over 30 years and have never had a problem as frustrating as this before."

**Glenn Davis, LaSalle, Ill.:** "My 1990 Ford F-150 is comfortable to drive, doesn't use oil after 60,000 miles, and is fuel efficient."

**Hank Van Dyk, Nitor, Alberta:** Hank's happy with his 1992 Ford F-250 4-WD diesel. "It's a good reliable truck that's comfortable to drive, easy handling, and fuel efficient."

**Clarence J. Wiebe, Rush Lake, Sask.:** "My all-time best pickup is a 1952 IHC L120 my father bought new and I've now used for about 15 years. It delivers consistently excellent performance - starting,

power, handling, and fuel efficiency. The body is still a lot more solid than a lot of trucks that are 40 years newer. Even the doors still work great."

"As for newer trucks, I like my 1992 Dodge 250 LE 4-WD equipped with turbo-charged diesel engine and 3-speed transmission. It's exceptionally fuel efficient, has great power, and great interior and exterior design. It also starts excellent in cold weather. I've heard a lot of people say they have trouble with paint, but so far I've had no problems."

**Kenneth G. Dibbell, New Berlin, N.Y.:** Kenneth is well satisfied with his 1993 GM HD 3500 equipped with 6.5 liter turbo-charged diesel engine, partly because of its fuel efficiency. "Unloaded I can get 17 mpg. Pulling my gooseneck trailer, which has an 8-ton payload, I can get 10 to 11 mpg."

**William Thew, DeBolt, Alberta:** William nominates a 1992 Ford F-150 1/2-ton pickup with 300 cu. in. engine and 5-speed transmission with overdrive as his best pickup. "I like the fuel economy and handling, the low purchase price, and dealership and company relations with their customers."

**Earl K. Bankston, Natalbany, La.:** Earl likes his 1991 Ford F-350 pickup but doesn't like an on-going problem with the paint. "It was only two years old when the paint peeled off the top and one fender. I felt Ford should have repainted it but the company refused because the warranty had expired."

**C. Sherman Allen, Conneaut Lake, Pa.:** He's had a problem with the 1993 Ford F-350 equipped with 7.3 liter diesel

**"It was only two years old when the paint peeled off the top and one fender."**

engine and 5-speed transmission he bought new - and the extended service plan he bought for \$1,545. He's contacted the Ford Motor Company of Ohio, his local Better Business Bureau, and the Pennsylvania attorney general's office about it.

"The problem was that last May, a rod that fastens to the clutch pedal broke. I soon discovered that the part could not be purchased separately, but only with the clutch hydraulic sleeve cylinder and reservoir. And the repair was not covered by my extended service plan."

"First, this is utterly ridiculous to have to pay \$65.48 or more when all I need is this rod. Also, the part did not wear out, it suddenly broke into three pieces, which could be a safety concern for Ford since owners might not be able to stop their trucks in time if this rod breaks. Why isn't this repair covered under my extended warranty program?"

**Lawrence Kupchinski, Buchanan, Sask.:** "My 1993 Dodge Dakota 4-WD is what it is because of torsion bar front suspension. That must be good if GM copied it the year after Dodge came out with it. This is my second Dakota and I never looked at another make when I bought it. Fuel economy could be better, though."