

Best & Worst Buys

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has much improved visibility and steering, increased lift on the 3-pt. hitch, good hydraulics, more power, and a power quad transmission. It's a great tractor."

Larry J. LaCroix, Niota, Ill.: "Our 1993 Chevrolet Corsica LT handles and rides better than the 1990 Mercury Topaz we had previously owned. I really like the anti lock brake system and the 6-cyl. engine."

"Our 1993 Murray 22-in. push mower is our worst buy. Once the blade gets a little dull the mower starts to vibrate up through the handles. After a couple of hours my hands become numb."

Eric Angus, Kersey LDS Farms, La Salle, Colo.: Eric bought his "best buy" 1991 Ford 8830 front wheel assist tractor to replace a 1989 Deere 4455. "It's had very few problems and the powershift transmission is the best on the market. It has a lot of power and a comfortable cab. It's also fuel efficient. I liked it so well I also bought a 1992 Ford 8730 and a 1993 Ford 7740. Both tractors have front wheel assist."

Sam Scarlett, New Market, Tenn.: Sam nominates his 1992 Henke 2309 TMR mixer-wagon as his "best buy". "I like it because we can mix more long hay with it. The wagon we had before could handle only about 2 lbs. of hay per cow, but this one can handle 5 or more lbs."

"My Ford F-350 dually diesel pickup is my worst buy. The Firestone tires in front were 'out of round' and my dealer couldn't find out what was wrong. We took it to a private company that found the problem and fixed it. The dealer paid for it."

Roger Parent, Milton, Vt.: "My 6-year-old Scofab silage-hauling hydraulic dump wagons are the best I've ever used (Scofab Equipment, Farham, Quebec, Canada). They're equipped with a hoist and unload out the back like a truck. I use them to unload silage into bunk silos. I like the ease and speed of unloading and also the rugged build with no moving parts. It takes only about 18 seconds to unload a wagon and I never have to get off the tractor. In the time it would take to hook up a pto shaft I can unload and be ready to go. I was so pleased with them that I became the company's U.S. distributor."

Bill Tidwell, Columbia Falls, Mont.: "My Stihl F36 weed eater starts good and has a lot of power. Also, the string is easy to replace."

John Peterson, Caledonia, Ill.: John's impressed with his Kubota AD70 rotary tiller. "The tines can be rotated either forward or backward which makes it very versatile. When used in reverse the tines can chew up the toughest sod. The 7 hp diesel engine has a lot of power. The tiller weighs 440 lbs., but it's equipped with hand clutches and the weight is evenly distributed so it's maneuverable. The only problem is that second gear should be a little faster and the transmission linkage is a bit sticky. Otherwise it's a pleasure to operate."

Raymond Hinkle, Pittsburg, Kan.: Raymond's disappointed with his Midwest 14-ft. lift harrow. "The weight of the harrow was too much on the back of the disk so the disk wouldn't work level. Also, the disk-harrow tended to gouge the soil, leaving holes and causing it to drag."

Tom Des Jarlais, Oconto, Wis.: "It does

an excellent job in heavy trash," reports Tom, pleased with his Brillion 7-shank coultter chisel plow. "The hydraulic control on the disk gang is an option that's well worth the money. I can set the disk to work shallow in bean stubble or deep in corn stalks. It pulls easy. I can go 5 mph using a 110 hp tractor."

"My 1989 New Holland 455 skid steer loader is my worst buy. The Kubota 3-cyl. diesel engine has been overhauled twice in

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1,500 hours. The next time it needs to be worked on I'll replace it with a gas engine. My dealer doesn't even want to see it."

Richard Begolka, Atlanta, Ill.: "I can operate it at 7 to 8 mph without covering corn. It does an excellent job," says Richard, pleased with his Hiner 5000 no-till cultivator.

On the negative side, "The electronic fuel injection and 5-speed transmission on my 1990 Ford F-250 pickup are apparently incompatible. The pickup bucks terribly when partially loaded. The company says this is normal which I regard as an admission of poor engineering."

Billy M. Fricks, Muldrow, Okla.: "My best buy is my 1973 Deere 110 lawn and garden tractor. I've had to tune it up only a couple of times and have otherwise only changed belts and bearings on the deck. It still runs like new and is on only its second battery."

"My Deere 2240 50 hp tractor equipped with a front-end loader is a best buy. I bought it used in 1981 and have had few problems with it. I replaced the water pump and rebuilt the starter."

Myron Bontrager, Arlington, Kan.: Myron's impressed with his 1993 Campbell Hausfield air compressor, an upright, 60-gal., 5 hp model. "I bought it mainly because it was economically priced. It has a lot of capacity and I haven't had any problems with it. It's my best buy."

Steven Roth, Lowell, Mich.: A Miller Pro 5100 forage chopper wagon heads Steven's "best buy" list. "We already had two 1981 Miller Pro 2175 wagons and they exceeded our expectations. We bought the 5100 last year and it works even better."

"Our 1993 Deines front deck mower is a best buy (Ransom, Kan.). It has a lot of capacity and is fun to drive. The deck flips up so it's easy to service."

Mark Eddleman, Dongola, Ill.: "The brakes and clutch could be improved a bit," says Mark, who's otherwise pleased with his 1991 White 80 American tractor. "It's comfortable to operate and has a nice cab with a comfortable air seat. It also has a lot of hydraulic capacity. The company should have kept making this tractor."

"My 1991 White 6100 no-till planter is well built. Once I get the correct air pressure set it does a near perfect job planting corn. The only problem I had was with a bad bearing on the walking tandem axles."

"My worst buy is a 1989 Kuker 3-pt. sprayer equipped with a 42-ft. boom. The

3-pt. hitch isn't well designed. I have to lengthen the tractor's 3-pt. top link almost all the way so I can hook up to the sprayer, then after I'm hooked up I have to shorten it all the way back up. The stand legs are built too weak and the boom height adjustment doesn't work right."

James LeMay, Cedartown, Ga.: James is a small vegetable grower. His best buy is his Covington TP-46 2-row planter equipped with standard duplex hoppers (Covington Planter Co., Inc., Albany, Ga.). "I can plant up to 5 mph in good conditions. It could be called a 'yes-till' planter because I have to prepare the seedbed, but that's just fine for vegetables and truck garden crops. It mounts on a 2-row Pittsburgh angle-iron frame cultivator. Row width can be varied from 24 to 72 in. and it'll plant any seed from turnips to large lima beans."

"It plants accurately and I can use it to apply fertilizer or to bed the soil and plant at the same time. I can also use it to interplant peas and beans with corn or to hill-drop gin-run cotton seed. It's built rugged, is simple to operate, and is reasonably priced. I'd recommend it to any small to medium size operator. If you have odd-size seeds, you can send them a sample and they'll custom make a plate or plates to suit your needs."

David L. Shaub, Rolla, Mo.: "In 1965 we bought a 1949 L.A. Case tractor and we still use it to pull a disk and a 4-bottom plow. It's our best buy of all time."

"We like our 1993 Bobcat 7753 skid steer loader. It has a lot of stability and is easy on fuel, and the Kubota diesel engine always starts right up."

Bill Critchfield, Osceola, Mo.: "Our 1994 Deere 7400 MFWD tractor is a best buy. The power quad transmission shifts smooth, and the engine runs quiet and has plenty of torque and power for a 100 hp tractor."

"My 1976 Deere 4430 tractor has performed well with only a few minor problems with the air conditioner."

"My all-time worst buy is my 1990 Suzuki 4-WD 4-wheel ATV. The engine has had continuous problems, especially with the carburetor, which keeps flooding. The dealer wouldn't pay for repairs even though it was under warranty, and the company wouldn't help, either."

Laurence Baudler, Fontanelle, Iowa: "Our Yamaha Moto 350 4-wheel ATV has 8,000 miles on it with only one breakdown which the company fixed at no charge. We use it to spray weeds and to work our cattle. We couldn't farm without it."

"Our 1993 Belarus 825 tractor is our worst buy. It had an oil leak that couldn't be fixed, and the hydraulics didn't work. It was in the shop a lot. The dealer and company gave me the run-around all the time. I finally sold it."

John W. Theuringer, Delta Junction, Alaska: "I nominate my ADASCO seed cleaner as worst buy. It doesn't remove small weed seeds such as wild buckwheat from my wheat and barley. Our rotary grain cleaner works just as good."

Hugh McMaster, Altona, Ill.: "My 1993 Simplicity front-cut 48-in. hydrostatic riding mower cuts smooth and reduces mowing time by at least 30% compared to my Toro 42-in. mower. It also greatly reduces the need for trimming afterward. However, it has a rough ride and poor traction on slopes."

"I've used my direct broadcast satellite (DBS) for one week now and am really impressed with it. It's an 18-in. dia. satellite

dish that lets me receive all the cable TV and pay per view stations out in the country without having to use a big satellite dish."

Dennis D. Ott, Fairbank, Iowa: "My 10-year-old DeLaval pipeline DV 300 milkers and DeLaval vacuum pump are my worst buys. The milkers work with pneumatic pulsation. However, they never operated at the same speed and if they got a speck of dirt in them they wouldn't work at all. Finally after three years the company came out with electronic improvements

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which helped a lot, but the vacuum pump still kept twisting off the rotor. I installed a new head last fall but still had to make three repairs that weren't covered by the warranty."

Don C. Buck, Weyburn, Sask.: "I like my 1994 Nissan key cab 4-WD pickup. It has over 10,000 miles with no problems and is fuel efficient. However, the radio could work a lot better."

William Cheek, Franklinville, N.C.: "My 1993 Deere GT242 lawn and garden tractor works even better than I had expected. I use it to mow my 1-acre lawn as well as to plow and cultivate. It's well-built and does an excellent job."

John E. Lavelle, Tasley, Va.: "My best buy is my Woods 5200 mower powered by a Kohler Command 20 hp engine. It's easy to operate and maintain. It has 77 hours on it with no problems. It has cut my mowing time from seven hours to five hours. I wouldn't trade it for any other mower on the market."

Curt Neyens, Minnetonka, Minn.: "The rebuilt Deere 619 engine block I bought for my 1984 8650 4-WD tractor is absolutely my worst buy in 25 years of farming. I bought the rebuilt engine block with a one-year limited warranty last October from Truck and Tractor Parts (TTP) Inc., Warsaw, Ind. It cost me \$4,972. When we got it, we made sure it was installed properly by a reputable local repair shop that did the job for \$2,500. When we got it to the field, the engine blew a head gasket after 84 hours. We had the fuel pump tested, as TTP requested, and found it was operating at specs. We took our tractor back to the local shop and they repaired it for \$1,200, a bill TTP agreed to pay. We took it back to the field, and the engine blew another head gasket after only 12 hours of use. This time, we pulled the engine and took it back to TTP in Indiana at our own expense. They gave us another block. We had that put in for \$1,026, and got the tractor back just before last Christmas. We'd put about 220 hours on it when it blew a third head gasket in August."

"TTP offered to fix or replace the engine block a third time but that meant going through all the hassles we had the second time, and again at our expense. They also offered me \$3,000 cash for it but I've already sunk \$12,000 into this block - including a tractor I rented for 84 hours at \$42 an hour last fall to finish harvest. So, instead of throwing good money after bad, I'm having a new Deere engine put in. That'll cost \$14,000, but will still be better than having to continue to argue with TTP over their rebuilt Deere engine block."