

Best & Worst Buys

(Continued from previous page)

service. It gives Deere a good run for its money because it's a good tractor that's reasonably priced."

Harry N. Boger, Hartline, Wash.: "My 1992 Deere 4455 tractor equipped with a loader has good traction because it's 4-WD and does a lot of fieldwork. It's easy riding."

"My 1986 Allis-Chalmers 8060 tractor is a worst buy. The clutch has had to be replaced four times or about every 200 hours. The dealer paid for the first one, but I had to pay for the other three."

Douglas Evans, Accomac, Va.: "My Melroe 220 Spray Coupe is easy to operate and the company sponsors annual schools that are excellent."

Norman Pohler, Spalding, Sask.: "It gets only 16 mpg on the highway," says Norman, who is otherwise pleased with his 1993 Ford Explorer 4-WD utility vehicle. "The 6-cyl. engine has plenty of power and there's a lot of room for gear in the back. Rides nice."

Norman also likes his 1990 Deere 265 garden tractor. "The mower and rototiller can be easily switched. It has a lot of power and I like the hydrostatic drive transmission. It's built better than other brands I've used. No problems. Handles comfortably and has tilt steering and an adjustable seat."

Gary Biester, Clay Center, Neb.: "My 1992 Deere 9400 combine is the most maintenance-free machine I've ever owned. I can't say enough good things about it. I use it to harvest 860 acres of corn, soybeans, and milo. All I have to do is add fuel."

"My 1992 Gleaner R52 combine is my worst buy. You name it, it broke. Things got worse the longer I owned this machine. All the main drive belts broke three times and each time both the dealer and the company

combine chaff spreader that he mounted on his White 8920 combine (Fast Lane Products, Box 65, Belmont, Iowa 50421). "It did a wonderful job without any problems. It's built well and swings out of the way, leaving room to service the sieves. It's also priced right. I made a chute out of a 4 by 8-ft. sheet of 1/4-in. plastic to funnel chaff from the sieves onto the spreader."

Philip M. Broer, Iowa Falls, Iowa: "I like my 1993 Dodge W350 4-WD pickup equipped with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine. It has a lot more power than the Ford F-250 pickup equipped with a 351 cu. in. V-8 engine that I traded in. It's also much more fuel efficient. The best the Ford ever got was 11 mpg, but my Dodge gets up to 20 mpg. The transmission had a problem but the dealer repaired it at no charge."

"I like my Perfect Sense stainless steel fenceline hog feeders (AgriSense Co., Box 446, Grinnell, Iowa 50112). They're equipped with a horizontal feed distribution wheel that meters feed to hogs. Feed drops into compartments inside the wheel, and when the hog rotates the wheel the feed drops through holes at the bottom of the wheel and into a tray. The hogs have to eat what's on the tray before any more feed will come out so they never waste fresh feed. No adjustments are necessary - all I have to do is fill the feeder. I like it better than the Peterson concrete feeders I had been using. They're hard to adjust to give out the right amount of feed."

Vic Stratman, Argyle, Mo.: Vic says his "best buy" is his 1990 Chevrolet Astro Van equipped with a 6-cyl. engine. "It had a lot of problems at first but the dealer solved them. Now it works great."

On the negative side, "My Lincoln pistol grip grease gun cost a fortune and I couldn't keep air out of it."

"My 1992 Vermeer 605E round baler is also a worst buy. I thought the Vermeer name meant quality. However, I found out that the 605E was an experimental baler that had had a lot of problems. That's an understatement. It wasn't too bad the first year but last year everything on it broke that could. Finally the gearbox went out. That was it. Anyone need parts for a 605E? I'm junking this one."

Myron Schafer, LaCrosse, Ind.: "Our 1993 Case-IH 1666 combine is a best buy. It has more power than the 1660 model that it replaced. The specialty rotor does a great job in tough-stemmed beans. The unloading auger wobbles but the dealer says he'll replace it. We installed a Schumacher 'easy cut' sickle on the 1020 head (S.I. Distributing, St. Marys, Ohio). The sickle has worked well so far. We hope it continues to work better than Case-IH's 1 1/2-in. system."

"Our Hesston 560 round baler is a best buy. It would make perfect bales every time if I always drove according to the monitor's directions. We had some problems with the hydraulic cylinders, but the dealer promptly took care of them."

"Our 1977 WilRich 30-ft. field cultivator is a best buy. We haven't had to do anything to it other than regular maintenance. We'll buy from WilRich again."

"Our 1990 Boman Bale Master 6810 round bale carrier from American Geothermal is a worst buy. Welds on the center main

frame keep breaking. It's designed for 8 bales but is built to handle only half that. I called the company three times to complain. Their only reply was, 'That's never happened before'. Buyer beware."

Roger Zylstra, Kellogg, Iowa: Roger nominates his 1984 Allis-Chalmers 8050 tractor equipped with front wheel assist and powershift transmission as his "best buy". "I bought it used in 1992 and it has performed well. I was really impressed with its ability under last year's wet conditions to do field work and pull my forage harvester."

Dan Smith, Scottsburg, Ind.: "My 1992 Deere 750 no-till drill is my best buy. I've used it to seed 1,200 acres with no problems."

Louis Klusinske, Wild Rose, Wis.: Louis is well satisfied with his 1987 Deere 2750 tractor. "It's fuel efficient and has been trouble-free except for a leak in the power steering system. My dealer fixed it immediately."

Robert J. Gardner, Chester, Md.: Robert's happy with his 1992 Case-IH Magnum 7140 tractor equipped with front wheel assist. "It has plenty of power, is easy on fuel, handles comfortably, and looks great. It's such a good tractor other companies are copying it."

Kenneth Frank, Minonk, Ill.: "My 1991 Deere 9500 combine is a pleasure to operate. It has a large, quiet cab and plenty of power. No problems."

"The Deere 750 no-till drill we rented last year did a good job."

Raymond Wittman, Garnett, Kan.: "He's unhappy with his Koehn Kalf Katch calf handling tool. "The handle came off the first time I tried to use it. I wrote the company and told them how they could fix the problem, but they never replied. I'll never buy anything again without first seeing it."

Hanna Greenberg, Elk River, Minn.: Hanna likes the "world's best" hoe he bought from Loren Kisby (Rt. 1, Box 22, Munder, Kan. 66959). The working end of the Rogue hoe is a section cut out of a disc blade. "I've been gardening for 60 years and raise flowers for sale so I've done a lot of hoeing. This hoe is the best I've ever used. It's a little heavy, but it always stays sharp."

John M. Brown, Big Sandy, Tenn.: "I used my 1993 Gleaner combine to harvest 1,000 acres of corn last year with no problems. It has plenty of power and a great cab. It's a best buy."

Ordell Gustad, Volin, S. Dak.: "I bought a New Holland 116 swinger windrower last summer and it's my best buy. The cutter-head suspension lets it float over rocks and other foreign objects better than any other windrower I've ever owned."

Robert L. Beckett, Jr., Stella, Neb.: Robert's the satisfied owner of a 1992 Case-IH 4800 field cultivator. "It's well-built, has excellent spacing between shanks, doesn't plug, and runs level. It does an excellent job."

On the negative side, Robert lists his Yetter row cleaners. "I spent 1 1/2 days trying to adjust them so that bean stubble wouldn't wrap around them. I finally gave up and removed them. My dealer did provide me with some guards designed to solve the problem so I'll try them again this spring."

Robert J. Berscheid, Grey Eagle, Minn.: "I'm pleased with my 1992 N-Tech vertical manure pump which I use to agitate my 70-ft. long, 55-ft. wide manure pit. Works fast and agitates all the manure from one location. I use a 90 hp tractor to power it. It takes only 1 1/2 min. to fill a 3,200-gal.

manure spreader tank. I had been renting a Houle manure pump but it needed a bigger tractor and didn't do a good job of agitating the entire pit, even though I moved the pump around."

Donald Beyer, Breckenridge, Minn.: A 1993 Ford New Holland combine rates as Donald's "best buy". "It threshes clean and has a lot of capacity."

James A. Meyer, Kiester, Minn.: James nominates his Simes Super Saver grain dryer as "best buy" (Simes, Inc., Box 38, Walters,

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Minn. 56092). "The design of this dryer is an achievement in simplicity, reliability, and efficiency. I believe it will rewrite some of the rules of crop drying."

Layton H. Anderson, New Auburn, Wis.: "My 1980 Ford F-250 pickup runs good and has a good body, but fuel economy is a disaster. It gets only 6 mpg whether it's empty or pulling a trailer. Neither the company nor my dealer will help. I can't trade it in even though it looks and runs like new. No other dealers want it, either."

D. H. Weisenborn, Morrilton, Fla.: "I recently bought a new Zetor 5211 tractor. It has outstanding fuel economy and cost less than a comparable used green, blue, or red tractor."

"Our 16 hp Gravely mower equipped with a 50-in. mower deck is a best buy."

Jerald Campbell, Pierson, Iowa: "Our best buy is our 1988 Artsway 500 grinder-mixer. We use it to grind and mix more than 75 tons of feed per month. Our only expense has been to replace a chain and repair the scale."

"Most of the time we use our Deere 4320 tractor to power the grinder. It's also a best buy."

Bryan Tolbert, Hazleton, Ind.: "My worst buy is my 1993 Stihl 029 Farm Boss chain saw. I bought it only two months ago, but the dealer has had it more than I have. The chain constantly jumps off, even on large trees. It has an adjustable oiler, but even on small trees the bar and chain get hot enough to burn my hands. The dealer and I have talked to two other 029 owners who have experienced the same problems. This is the first Stihl saw I've ever owned and if the company doesn't solve the problem soon, I'm sure it'll be the last."

Albert Kohlmeyer, Chatfield, Minn.: "One of my worst buys is a Dyna Drive ground-driven rotary tiller imported to the U.S. from England by HCC Inc., Mendota, Ill. We bought it with a written guarantee that if we didn't like it, the dealer would take it back and our cost would be \$6 per acre plus wear and tear. The first year we had problems with the rolling basket at the rear of the machine. It would fill with dirt and act as a huge roller so we often had to use a tire iron to dig it out. The next year was really dry and dirt and trash piled up on top of the machine. We often had to use a hoe to scrape everything off. We had to harvest some corn in the spring, and when we used the Dyna Drive afterward, stalks pushed along in front of the gearbox housing leaving deep trenches. We decided to return it to the dealer. The wear and tear turned into 10% depreciation per year so it cost us over \$12 per acre to use the machine."

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said the problem was caused by operator error. The hydraulic lever in the cab broke off twice, once resulting in a near disaster. There's nothing good about this combine. It's a lemon."

Randall Roberts, Bell, Fla.: Randall mounted a 1993 Kemper Champion 3000 forage harvester head on his New Holland self-propelled silage harvester (Taylor Implement Co., Box 725, West Hwy. 24, Hoxie, Kan. 67740). "It uses large rotors and gathering drums to cut and feed the material without the use of gathering chains. The cutting rotors and gathering drums are powered by a unique gear system that runs entirely in oil. It'll cut three 36-in. rows or four 30-in. rows. It worked even better than I expected. It feeds more evenly than a row crop header and won't plug up. It has increased my daily chopping capacity from 40 acres per day to 60 or more."

"My New Holland 4-row row crop header was my worst buy. It was always breaking down or plugging up, and it seemed like I always had to adjust it. It was an expensive machine to maintain."

Philip Long, Bethany, Mo.: Philip's impressed with the Fast Lane swingaway