

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

Vernon Schulze, Humboldt, Iowa: Vernon says his 1993 White 8-row 30-in. 3-pt. mounted air planter is neither a best nor a worst buy. It's equipped with trash whippers, "V" closing wheels, and notched marker discs. "I bought it because I had heard that it does a good job of seed placement and spacing. Well, at times it does and at times it doesn't. It'll plant nice for a while and then it'll drop two to four seeds in a hill, followed by a short space where there are no seeds. However, I like the 'V' closing wheels.

"I bought a pto-operated pump for it because I was told that my tractor's hydraulic system would get hot running the planter. I have to run the tractor engine at 1,500 rpm's or more to get adequate pressure and to warm up the oil enough to run the planter. I can't just turn on the tractor in the morning and start planting."

Michael Pracheil, Dorchester, Neb.: "My 1989 Case-IH 8460 round baler works good and is easy to operate. However, the hitch is hard to hook up and the pto shaft is too heavy. The pickup should have wheels so that the teeth on it don't break so easily. It also should be able to do a better job of baling light straw - it doesn't feed in properly."

buy. It wouldn't start after the temperature dropped to only 20 degrees. I tried a new starter, a rebuilt starter, a new-design starter, and then rewired the electrical system and cleaned all ground connections but nothing helped. Finally I sold the tractor with about 2,500 hours on it. I heard the new owner also replaced the starter."

Steve Kovar, East Grand Forks, Minn.: Steve's pleased with his 1989 Massey-Ferguson 3650 tractor. "I really like its performance and comfort. It has a lot of power for its size. It's fuel efficient for a 130 hp tractor and uses 2 to 5 gal./hour depending on the load. It's handy to operate and easy to service. It has 2,000 hours with only a couple minor problems that the dealer took care of promptly."

Frank S. Wolcott, Bozeman, Mont.: "I have only 130 hours on my 1992 Case-IH 7110 tractor, but I'm well pleased with it. Four wheel drive makes farming our hills much easier."

Luke R. Thelen, Fowler, Mich.: Luke's happy with his Deere 2800 variable width plow. "Lets me adjust plowing width on-the-go hydraulically from the cab."

"My Polaris 350 cc liquid-cooled 4-WD ATV is handy and a good buy."

On the "worst buy" side, Luke lists his Mohawk rotary brush cutter. "It continually sheared bolts on uneven ground. Finally I installed a slip clutch pto."

D.E. Gladfelter, Seven Valleys, Penn.: He says his 1988 Massey-Ferguson 1035 4-WD diesel compact tractor is his "best buy". "I bought it used with 11,500 hours. It has almost 12,000 hours on it now. It runs good and the 31 hp engine has plenty of power. I mount a 6-ft. belly-mounted mower on it and it really works good. I can pull a 3-bottom, 14-in. 3-pt. plow with it about 6 in. deep. I also use it to pull an 8-ft. disk. I use a loader on it to haul snow, manure, dirt, etc. I use the tractor every day and it never gives me any problems."

John B. Heilman, Miller, S. Dak.: "My 1989 Honda 4-WD ATV is my best buy. It's ready to go whenever I am. However, I wish it had a foot-controlled throttle. Whenever I use it for spot spraying, my left arm really gets tired."

Walter D. Graham, Pella, Iowa: "It's the best tractor Deere ever made," says Walter about his 1966 Deere 4020. "I recently had it overhauled. They put in a new clutch and rear main seal. It pulls a 5-bottom plow right along in fourth gear at 5 1/4 mph."

"My 1989 Chevrolet Astro Van equipped with a 4.3-liter engine rides nice and gets 20 to 25 mpg. It can hold 8 people and has plenty of power. I like the air conditioner and stereo radio."

"The 1992 Norsmann 10-ply radial tires on my 1984 Chevrolet 4-WD 3/4-ton pickup are my worst buy. They don't have the bite I thought they would have and don't stay balanced which causes the pickup to shake between 40 and 50 mph. I'll never buy them again."

F.W. Fenton, Mercer, Maine: "My 1984 Chevrolet 1/2-ton pickup is my best buy. It has 70,000 miles with no problems at all."

Freddie Earnheart, Alamo, Tenn.: "All Chevrolet and GMC 6.2 and 6.5-liter diesel trucks have a bad cooling system. I've owned 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988, 1990, and 1992 pickups, and they all get hot in the field. The problem is that the radiator is too small. The radiator on Ford trucks has twice as much capacity."

Bill Landon, New Haven, Vt.: "My SAME 160 Hercules tractor is my worst buy. It has a weak pto gear train. My dealer

Michael Schomers, Earling, Iowa: Michael likes his 1993 Deere 4455 2-WD tractor equipped with powershift transmission. "It's a good all-around tractor. I use it in the field to spray, plant, and pull grain wagons."

"I mounted Rawson Zone Till attachments on my Deere 6-row planter (Rawson Farms, 7413 North Nottawa Road, Farwell, Mich. 48622). They eliminated the need to do any tillage work at all last spring. They're a best buy."

Ernie Leyburn, Arran, Sask.: "It's a very low maintenance baler," says Ernie, pleased with his 1983 New Holland 849 round baler. "We've used it to make several thousand trouble-free bales. Truckers like the small bales because they squeeze together nicely on a lowbed trailer, making them easy to haul for long distances."

Lloyd Andrews, Lloydminster, Sask.: Lloyd owns a 1985 New Idea 486 round baler. "I like how it performs, but in the last five years it has caught on fire three times. The main problem is that the bearings don't have any locking nuts. After years of wear they turn on the shaft and get hot."

Gary Steckelberg, Nickerson, Neb.: Gary nominates his 1991 Case-IH 5130 Maxxum tractor equipped with front wheel drive assist as his "best buy". "It always starts in cold weather and has a great cab with good all-around visibility. However, I wish the remote hydraulic controls were clustered together."

"My 1982 Deere 2940 tractor is my worst