

holds together. We've been plagued with breakdowns. First, the main drive chain tighteners broke. Then it got hard to start. The arms and tilting mechanism aren't heavy enough so we've had to do a lot of welding."

Excellent performance and after-the-sale service earned this compliment for a Mueller 200 gal. milk bulk cooler and Fre-Heater compressor for salvaging "free" hot water: "It cools milk efficiently and we have plenty of hot water. The company has sent men to check and adjust valves that didn't operate properly. Mueller really stands behind their product," reports Don Smelley, Weatherford, Texas.

"As long as a company treats us this way, I see no need to change brands," says R. L. Hargroves, Melvin, Texas. He notes that his Deere 4430 tractor was giving good service when the final drive went out after 3 years and 2700 hours. "Deere and Co. extended the warranty," says Hargroves, who also lists a Deere 7700 combine as a "best" buy: "The machine has had some problems but they've been corrected eagerly by dealers. The new 224 platform does everything the company says it will, and more. This machine is the best one out of five 7700's I've purchased since 1971."

In Nebraska, Clifford Kuskie, of Brule, blames improper installation of air motors for his dissatisfaction with an 8-row Allis Chalmers air planter: "The AC fieldman told me the air motors were running too slow. Real cause was the dealer who had

work of at least two others using smaller planters."

John added that he's disappointed with the performance of Parquat: "We used it to control volunteer wheat in wheat stubble that was being planted to corn. It caused burning of the leaves but results were only temporary and not sufficient to kill the wheat."

**Buckey Jones, Smithdale, Miss.:** "Deere's Max-Emerge planter (7100) is by far the best planter that I have ever used. Every seed is planted at a uniform depth and rate, insuring a perfect stand every time." He's disappointed with his Deere 8200 grain drill: "This grain drill will not plant at a uniform depth, nor will the rate of seed planted remain constant. It is impossible to get both sides of the drill to plant at the same rate."

**William Williams, Eddyville, Ky.:** He reports that "Deere's new no-till attachment for their 7000 planter is the best no-till I've seen." Other "best buys" he's made include a Deere 4230 tractor with quadrange transmission ("we've been extremely satisfied with the tractor's performance and especially the way the transmission works") and a Sidewinder rotary cutter (15 ft., fold-up type).

**Ivan Block, Hereford, Texas:** Heading his "best buy" list is a Deere Max-Emerge planter (model 7100): "In this area, we plant on beds and, with this planter, I have complete control of planting depth. It cuts a 'V' in the soil, drops seed in the bottom, and presses the soil from the sides of the trench. I mounted a rolling bed shaper on the front which firms the bed in front of the planter."

New tillage equipment topped a number of "best buy" lists. Here are the machines mentioned in our random survey, and why owners are "sold" on their performance:

**Eugene Elsner, Langford, S. Dak.:** "The only machine I've bought in many years that I could use without rebuilding is a Herman harrow. Bought it about five years ago and even on it we had to add grease fittings to the wheels," says Eugene. He's also happy with his new Lubbock vibrating ripper plow: "The vibration action settles the soil after loosening it. That's the good part. It was the same untested design deal that you get with new machines — hitch bent, gauge wheel axles bent, and no grease or fittings in the wheel bearings."

Eugene is disappointed with his 1976 Chevrolet K10 4-wheel drive pickup. "First, the little things. It took three new air-conditioner thermostats until one worked. The choke wasn't connected when delivered. Air leaked out the radial tires until I put tubes in them." Eugene says these and other "little things" he could live with but what really disturbs him is "a rumbling vibration that comes and goes. We did all the standard things — got the shafts running true, checked angles, and replaced one shaft assembly. Then, I found out you can't get it smooth. It will be smooth for a ways then rough a ways."

**James Woodruff, Thomasville, Ga.:** He's "sold" on his Lely Rotterra: "It does a fine job incorporating herbicides and preparing seedbeds. I've rigged it up so I can put on herbicide, prepare the seedbed, and plant — all in one trip over the field."

**Tom Foster, Colchester, Ill.:** "This machine makes the most uniform seedbed I have ever seen," says Tom of his new Vicon Power Harrow (16 ft.). "On clay hillsides or good black land, the seedbed is consistently the same. I have it on a 70 hp tractor. It does a wonderful job. A larger tractor would mean more speed but I don't feel the seedbed would be any better."

**Terry Treadway, Hernado, Miss.:** His "best buy" nomination is a Deere V-90, 7-tine Super chisel plow ripper. Here's why: "Due to the V-shape of the toolbar and the curved shanks, it lifts and turns the soil. Dirt does not have a chance to pinch the shanks as the shanks loosen the ground before the following shanks get to it. We had a dry summer and feel these plows more than paid for themselves last year. We do all of our plowing with

## "This machine makes the most uniform seedbed I've ever seen."

them and have used our regular chisel plows only once in the last two years."

Terry also notes that he's not at all happy with a membership he bought in a "Farmers buying service — Farmers and Ranchers Group Purchasing, Abilene, Kan. Did not get results as promised. This service was supposed to enable us to buy parts, equipment, chemicals, and so forth at a big discount. But, when we checked on some things, they were always higher than our local suppliers. Did not follow through on services promised. Waste of money."

**Carroll Harvey, Palacios, Texas:** "This is a very good piece of cultivating equipment," he says of his single gang tine Dickeyvator cultivator, from Dickey Machine Works. "It's very easy to adjust and does an excellent job of cleaning out weeds and grasses in cotton, milo and soybeans. With its vibrator shanks, it shakes dirt off the roots of weeds and grasses and, within an hour, they are wilting and dying."

**Shirley Haney, Athens, Ala.:** He lists a "best buy" tillage tool (an IH 490 disk) and a tractor — a 4630 Deere with cab and air conditioning which, he says, is "great on hot, dusty days. The disk has 7½ in. spacing front and rear, and floating wings that flex when disk around terraces. It's a real good finishing disk."

**Robert Propson, Menasha, Wis.:** "It's the best digger I have had," says Robert, proud owner of a Wil-Rich 30 ft. field cultivator. "It does a real good

job and doesn't tend to gallop or jerk from side to side like other diggers we have had when used at high speed. I like the walking tandem axles and the distance the teeth can raise to ride over stones. It has very good welding of the frame and is high quality overall."

On the negative side, Robert faults Brookside Farms Research for poor service: "We gave them \$500 to take soil and feed samples for analysis. Some of the soil test results we never did get and the feed tests were too late to help. They took a haylage sample in June while we were filling silo. In October, we got the results. The silo had already been emptied and filled with corn silage."

An Iowa farmer also cited a Wil-Rich field cultivator (24 ft.) as his "best buy": "In recent years, our moisture situation has been low. This field cultivator has helped save valuable moisture while working fields for planting. It has plenty of weight and heft to stay in the soil and work at uniform depth in all types of soil, hard or soft. It also helps us have a clod-free seedbed," he pointed out.

Here are other "best" and "worst" buys nominated by randomly selected FARM SHOW readers from across the U.S.:

**Silak oral pig-iron:** "Pigs like it. Easy and fast to use, and there's no needle damage," says Geo Carpenter, Lawrence, Mich.

He's been disappointed with Norelco heat bulbs which, he says, "burn out too fast, some in less than a day."

**Chore Time flexible auger:** "This auger was easy to install and hasn't given any problems. It has an automatic shutoff in the auger itself, and also in the feeder to prevent damage if the system is full. There's also a similar switch in the bulk bin that shuts the system off when the bin is empty so the system doesn't run empty," reports an Indiana farmer.

**Amiben herbicide:** "I've used this product for the past six years and have been more than satisfied with its performance. Each year we receive many comments on our clean fields," Wes Moeller, New Liberty, Iowa.

**IH 574 tractor:** Millard Morgan, Jr., Bailey, N.C., is well pleased with its performance but wishes it had "a larger canopy, and sound deadening material underneath to prevent sound reverberations".

**Allis Chalmers Gleaner combine:** "It took 100 bu. per acre wheat with lots of straw with no trouble. Did a good job on pinto beans — didn't crack any and got lots of dirt out. About as good a job as I've seen. On corn, it got all the corn off the cob and didn't blow any over. Doesn't use much diesel fuel." Robert Steyaert, Hillrose, Colo.

He's also well pleased with a Dakon pickup and windguard for the combine: "The pickup teeth don't break easily but, when they do, they're replaced easily and don't cost a fortune."

## "As long as a company treats me this way I see no reason to change brands."

only installed three air motors instead of four. The planting was very uneven and hard to keep at a uniform depth. Air could not hold the seed in the holes of the plate. Skips and doubles were common. Installing one air blower per two rows did help some," reports Clifford, who ended up trading it for a 7100 Deere planter which, he says, "did an excellent job".

Here's how other farmers who nominated new corn planters size them up:

**John Wynnill, Kirwin, Kan.:** He bought a rear-folding planter toolbar from Kinze Mfg., Williamsburg, Iowa, and equipped it with 16 Buffalo planter units (30 in. spacing): "We had wanted to go to a larger planting unit for some time. This was the first unit that would fold easily for transport and flex in the middle in the field. Previously marketed toolbars with 12 or 16 rows were too rigid for use on uneven ground. While this unit is expensive, it is very well built and enables one operator to do the