

FARMERS SIZE UP NEW-PRODUCT PURCHASES

We asked randomly selected farmers to "tell it like it is" in nominating their "best" and "worst" buys in the past 12 months.

by Harold M. Johnson
Editor

Buying Tips You Can Use

"... See one in action before you buy to make sure it works."

"... Price is important but not as important as buying from a good, dependable dealer who services and stands behind everything he sells."

These and dozens of other buying tips you can use showed up in our just-completed FARM SHOW buying survey. We sent a questionnaire to a group of randomly selected farmers from all across the U.S., asking them to "tell it like it is" in nominating their "best" and "worst" new product purchases in the past 12 months, and to pass along whatever buying "tips" they had to offer.

This report is based on the first 35 questionnaires returned. In checking them over, it came as no surprise to learn that the one buying "tip" mentioned most often was:

Buy from a dependable dealer who services and stands behind everything he sells!

"Service means a lot to me," says Wilburn Ludlum, Jr., Moran, Kan., who nominated a Ford 642 combine as his "best" buy: "It has lots of capacity, adjustments are easy and it does a nice job of threshing. And, I've received excellent service from the Ford dealer."

His practice of "dealing with dependable dealers" also paid off in the

Kenneth Baldry, Dumont, Minn., credits a cooperative dealer for solving a defective factory welding problem with a model 1105 Massey Ferguson loader: "We were lifting about a half yard of dirt and the lifting arms broke off. The dealer took it back and reinforced the arms. No problem since."

Making a bad buy can be costly, as Charles Schlabs, Hereford, Texas, can testify: Buying a poorly designed and engineered beet harvester resulted in "50 to 75% down time every day, and loss of \$20,000 worth of crop. We used it one year and retired it. No one wanted it in trade." Schlabs replaced it with a John Deere

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4310 beet harvester which has performed with flying colors: "It has about twice the capacity of any other harvester, including the 1974 Deere 4300. Works very well in muddy conditions."

Just about every farmer who nominated a new tractor as his "best buy" cited fuel economy as one of the key reasons:

"Fuel economy is great and dealer service the best," says Fritz Beissel, Hampton, Minn., of his 1976 model 1155 Massey Ferguson tractor. "Of all the tractors I've ever owned, this one is the most for the money."

Ben Sarver, Pioneer, Ohio, says his New Idea Uni-Harvester "has done an excellent job with no problems after initial adjustments. Fuel economy has been good."

We bought it in July, 1975," says Wendal Vaughan, Mangum, Okla., of his "best buy" nomination — a Steigner Cougar 11 tractor: "It now has 1,300 hours and runs perfectly. Fuel consumption is far better than we expected. Its traction in sandy soils staggers the imagination."

G. O. Kalcinski, Camden, Mich., says his "best buy" Case 1370 has given excellent fuel economy, averaging about 7 gal. per hour. He also likes its ease of handling, with all the controls on the right side of the seat.

Two farmers who nominated Ford tractors as their "best" buy both cited fuel economy as a key reason:

Says Ralph Roschen, Lake City, Minn., of his model 7000: "We like it because it handles real well, has an excellent pto clutch, and is economical to operate — which is very important in this day and age."

Wesley Walmsley, Norfolk, Neb., agrees, citing fuel economy and ease of handling as real "pluses" of his 9600 Ford tractor. He's disappointed, however, in the tractor's draft sensing mechanism ("It's one of the slowest I've been around") and the cab ("Which they finally improved").

purchase of a 12 ft. Bush Hog chisel plow he wasn't happy with because of "too light material. Bent the frame and broke bolts that hold the shanks." The dealer took it back and sold him another chisel plow better suited to Ludlum's soil conditions and tractor size.

"My dealer has taken care of all the problems so far," reports Danny Turner, Orangeville, Idaho, who blames faulty workmanship at the factory for "small items that went wrong" with his 4366 International 4-wheel drive tractor. "Had to put a new injector pump on it, it vibrates when making turns and the pinion seals leaked oil." All the work has been covered under warranty and Turner is satisfied his IH dealer will have it "working great".