

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

**Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy**  
Send your nominations to:  
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,  
Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use  
the survey form on our website at  
www.FARMSHOW.com,  
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**Paul Volk, Battle Creek, Neb.:** “I’ve had numerous best buys over the years including **Stihl** chainsaws, **Dodge** pickups and a 1974 **Allis Chalmers** 7050 tractor. But my best buy ever was my 2013 **May Wes** Stalk Stompers that we mounted on our New Holland 98D corn head ([www.maywes.com](http://www.maywes.com); ph 800 788-6483). The first thing we noticed was the lack of a crunching noise while driving our tractor and grain cart across the rows. Also, there were no more flat or pockmarked tires on the tractor.

“When installing the Stalk Stompers I messed up installing a grease zerk in the pivot bolt. When I called the company, the lady who answered said I wasn’t the first person to have this problem and that she would send two new bolts right away. The bolts arrived two days later, at no charge. Not only did the company not charge me for my mistake, they also didn’t claim I was the first person to ever have this problem. I can’t remember that ever happening before. Stalk Stompers are a superior product, and the company offers superior customer service.”

**John Fathke, Avon, S. Dak.:** John likes his 2014 **Dodge** Ram pickup. “This pickup is fuel efficient, and I love the storage box that

**HydroStar** add-on hydrogen generator he bought from Andrew Herrold of Beltsville, Md. It uses an EFI chip made specifically for the electronics in your vehicle, allowing it to burn supplementary hydrogen fuel and improve the vehicle’s mileage.

“I bought an extra EFI chip and spent a total of \$350, but I still couldn’t get this generator to work right,” says Ron. “Herrold is a good man, but his product didn’t work for me.”

**Ed Metcalf, Lakeview, Ark.:** “**Yaktrax** slip-on traction grippers fit over boots and shoes for walking on ice or snow in the winter. But I’ve found they also work great for walking on slippery stream bottoms when fishing or working ([www.yaktrax.com](http://www.yaktrax.com); ph 800-446-7587).

**Mike Sieber, Mannington, W. Va.:** “I bought a **Howse** heavy-duty rotary tractor mower this summer and have had nothing but trouble with it. It has big, solid rubber wheels but it’s under-engineered and has been on blocks as often as it’s been on the tractor this summer.

“The mower has about 10 hrs. on it and during this time a blade fell off, one spindle bearing burned up, a grease fitting fell out, and I had to grind off part of the deck because the front wheel rubbed on it when I had the mower at its lowest setting. To change the height of the deck, you have to take off the wheels and cross members, a job that takes 20 min. on this mower but only took about a minute on my old one. Also, the pto locking pin is in a recessed part of the shaft so I had to grind off the protective parts because I couldn’t get my thumb in to push down the pin. And even though the belts are the same size, I can’t get them both tight at the same time – one is always looser than the other. Also, the middle blade single grease fitting is only accessible if I loosen the entire middle section and slide the gearbox forward.

“The Howse website is not much help. When I needed a replacement bearing I couldn’t find it there so I ended up buying it locally.”

**Elton Wylie, Hamilton, Texas:** “I’ve used my **Honda** Rancher 400FAATV to haul logs, water trailers, fence repair equipment, hay bales and so forth. I regularly change the oil and use a marine fuel stabilizer. This ATV runs like a top and always starts right up. It’s a great machine.”



**Eugene Mitchell, Gladys, Va.:** “My **Hudson** bandsaw mills are excellent ([www.hud-son.com](http://www.hud-son.com); ph 800 765-7297). I bought an Oscar 18 model in 2006 and an Oscar 228 in 2009. Both work great. I added a 3 by 6-ft. frame to them to extend the log table.

“**Woodmizer** bandsaw blades are excellent.”

**Dale McCleary, New Park, Penn.:** “It’s a handy truck for doing small jobs,” says Dale about his 2010 **GM** Canyon 4-WD pickup. “This pickup is dependable even though I did have to replace the water pump, and it drives extremely well. It has about 125,000 miles on it and seems to be holding up well considering how much I use it.”

On the negative side, he lists his 2010 **Ford** F-250 Super Duty 4-WD pickup equipped with a 6.4-liter diesel engine. “Its fuel economy is terrible, especially when pulling trailers. So far this year it’s getting only 9.2 miles per gallon.

“I’ve had endless problems with sensors, the 4-WD system, a leaky radiator, broken intake manifold bolts, torn seats, broken

fits under the back seat. It’s a great all-around pickup.”

**Lloyd Dean, Effingham, Ill.:** “My 1997 **Ford** F-350 pickup has more than 435,000 miles on it but is still going strong. It has gone through one set of fuel injectors and three E40D transmissions. I’m always hauling a load with this pickup, whether it’s on a gooseneck trailer or a flatbed.”

**Jake A. Shetler, Utica, Minn.:** For more than 30 years Jake has been using **Schaeffer’s Penetro 90** penetrating oil ([www.schaefferoil.com](http://www.schaefferoil.com); ph 800 325-9962). It’s designed to lubricate all types of moving parts that have become difficult to operate due to increased friction from wear, corrosion or the buildup of sludge and grime.

“There’s no other product on the market that works as well. Works great for removing rusty nuts and bolts, and it also works good on old tools to get things loosened up and working again. It’s a great product.”

He’s a dealer for **Stop-Fyre** fire extinguishers and has also used them on his own for many years ([www.ake.com](http://www.ake.com); ph 888 673-4734). “Unlike chemical fire extinguishers, Stop-Fyre uses a liquidified gas agent that’s not corrosive to metals and electronics, making it safe to use for extinguishing small machinery fires. And because it’s a ‘clean agent’ fire extinguisher, it doesn’t leave behind a mess to clean up. It works great. Nothing else even comes close to how well it works.”

**Ron Betts, Bronson, Mich.:** “The 1988 **Sachs Dollmar** 116 chainsaw I bought used in 1992 was a great saw ([www.dolmarpowerproducts.com](http://www.dolmarpowerproducts.com)). I always keep a 4-year supply of firewood on hand, so I used this saw a lot. The company doesn’t carry parts for its older models, so I finally traded the 116 for a new **Dolmar** 6100.”

On the “worst buy” side, he lists the