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guarantee but lasted only about 5 years. The company wouldn't honor the guarantee because they said I didn't have an account with them. I'm not a farmer and don't own a business, and I pay with a check or cash so my name wasn't in their computer files. To prove ownership, I would have had to spend

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a lot of time searching for a cancelled check or receipt going back several years. I think a lifetime guarantee should last more than 5 years. I finally bought a new starter at O'Reilly Auto Parts, where I was able to get a real guarantee."

**Raymond Shoberg, Pewaukee, Wis.:** "I use the **AMANA** microwave oven I bought new in 1997 still works like new."

"I use a **METALpro** 45-ton iron worker with attachments in my shop. It works great and I think everyone should have one (www.metalprocorp.com; ph 262 679-0504.)"

**Walter Pinkowski, Jr., Argyle, N.Y.:** "Our **Massey Ferguson** 283 tractor equipped with a **Massey Ferguson** A10 loader is easy to service. We use this little 'bulldozer' to push and pack silage in our trench silos."

"I bought a used 2004 **Dodge** 3/4-ton diesel pickup with about 185,000 miles and it hasn't had any problems."

"I use my 1988 **New Idea** 5209 disc mower to cut about 250 acres of hay per year. The hitch on this mower isn't pretty, but the mower cuts great."

**John Copenhaver, Neillsville, Wis.:** "My **Ford New Holland** 1520 is a great tractor."

**Jack Mayer, Chilton, Wis.:** "My 1979 **Deere** 2840 tractor always starts, has a lot of power, and is easy on fuel. However, the brakes push down hard."

**Harry M. Roy, Middlebury, Ind.:** "My wife and I have greatly enjoyed riding our 1999 **Harley-Davidson** Low Rider motorcycle. It's very reliable and has more than 160,000 miles on it."

**Gary Hovde, Pepin, Wis.:** "My 2008 **Mercury** Grand Marquis is a dependable, solid car. Very comfortable and fuel efficient."

"My 1991 **Murray** 30-in. riding mower still runs good. One time the magnets fell off the machine's starter, but my neighbor used **Gorilla Glue** to reattach them."

**Kenneth Longpre, Hillman, Mich.:** "My 2015 **Stihl** M5251C chainsaw always starts no matter what the weather is like."

"My **Husqvarna** chainsaw wouldn't start if the saw was warm. I also had problems with my **Husqvarna** walk-behind mower. A mechanism underneath it was wide open and plugged up with grass, which caused the mower to finally quit running."

**Bill Hertenberger, Navasota, Texas:** He isn't happy with the **NITO** Terra Grabber tires on his 2011 Chevrolet 3/4-ton diesel pickup. "They're supposed to be a premium tire, but within 17,000 miles 3 of the 4 tires showed tread separation. The company rep said they had come out with new tires with an improved design, so I bought a set. However, in less than 25,000 miles two of the tires began to separate. I'm almost 75 years old and don't drive fast. There have been no wheel alignment problems with this pickup, and I check tire air pressure regularly. So no more NITO tires for me."



**Leroy Miller, Beach City, Ohio:** Leroy's happy with his **Lapp** heavy-duty aluminum dumper wagon (www.lappwagons.com; ph 717 733-2117). Measuring 30 in. wide by 60 in. long by 13 in. deep, the wagon has a capacity of 15 cu. ft. and can handle loads weighing up to 2,000 lbs. It comes with a tractor "hitch and handle" combination.

"This wagon is a must have for small farms," says Leroy. "We use ours almost every day to haul firewood, sawdust, manure, mulch, and more. It dumps easily with an overcenter tipping design."

"Our **DR** Power 30-in. brush mower works great to keep brush trimmed around our wooded property. Briars don't have a chance when this mower hits them."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his **DR** self-propelled lawn mower. "The self-propelled mechanism goes so slow that we almost have to push the mower to get anything done. I called the company and they sent an older model transmission which was supposed to make the mower go faster, but it didn't help. It wasn't long before the self-propelled mechanism quit working entirely. Now all we have is a push mower."

**Dick Clevenger, Letts, Iowa:** A **Larson** storm door rates as his "worst buy". "While remodeling our kitchen, we installed a 42 by 80-in. entrance door, and after some time passed we decided to add a storm door. Larson was the only company we could find that makes special order storm doors, and they sell them only through **Lowe's** home improvement stores. Larson wouldn't ship the door to us so we had to drive 40 miles one way to **Lowe's** to pick up the door."

"Soon after installation, the door started sagging at the top hinge. The aluminum frame on the door was only 3 in. wide, and the door's full-length thermal glass window was very heavy. I complained to **Lowe's** but they said I had to contact Larson. With no phone number available - because **Lowe's** wouldn't release Larson's customer service number - I had to write a letter to Larson. However, the company never replied so after 90 days or so I again contacted **Lowe's**."

"By this time the miters on the corners of the door were cracking and since the door was starting to bind on the latch side, I had to move the latch frame over to allow the door to close. **Lowe's** said that by doing that I had voided the warranty and there was nothing they could do, except order a new door at my expense for about \$850."

"At that point I decided to beef up the door on my own, since it was out of warranty anyway. I jacked up the latch side to take the cracking out of the door and installed a 1/4-in. steel gusset at each corner, using 8 screws to hold the door up. I needed a new sweep for the sill and had to drive to **Lowe's** to order it in person - another 80-mile round trip. Then when the sweep came in I had to drive back

## Pasteurizer Great For Small Producer

**Marjie Lupien, Waldoboro, Maine:** "The **Vat** 15-gal. pasteurizer (www.thevatpasteurizer.com; ph 800-236-3956) is a best buy for my cheesemaking business, **Mystique Chèvre**."

"I've used it for about 15 years. I started making cheese in 1979 and for many years used a pasteurizer made in England. The **Vat** was a great replacement and doubled my production capacity, allowing me to make cheese less often."

"At 81, I only milk 6 to 8 goats and make cheese twice a week. I don't know of many other pasteurizers for small farms like mine, but I do believe The **Vat** is unique in letting me pasteurize and make cheese in the same machine."

"It also keeps me legal. The **Anderson Chart Recorder** that comes with it records milk temperature and air space heat, which I need to sell my cheese in Massachusetts. It meets FDA requirements if I wanted to ship my cheese to other states. However, I sell everything I make within 25 miles."

"The **Vat** is easy to clean and easy to use, but what I really appreciate is the customer service. I can call the company any time and talk to a person who understands the machine and knows what he is talking about."

"My **Nubian** goats are another best buy.



**Vat** pasteurizer can pasteurize milk and also make cheese.

Other producers like the **Swiss** breeds for the higher quantity of milk they produce. But the **Nubians** produce a higher butterfat milk, creamy like **Jersey** milk and ideal for making cheese. I use it to make soft and surface ripened cheese, as well as cheese packed in oil."

to the store again and pick it up."

"Meanwhile, the brass door handle on the outside had lost its plating and looked bad, so I had to drive to **Lowe's** again to order a new one and then make yet another trip to pick it up. I wanted to buy a nickel-plated door handle, but **Lowe's** said I had to buy a brass one because that's what the door came with. I'm completely disgusted with both **Lowe's** and **Larson**."

**John W. Witzel, Pleasant Dale, Neb.:** John's the satisfied owner of a **Stihl** MS362C chainsaw. "I wasn't real excited about this saw at first. It had a great chain brake and compression release, but it still started hard. However, once I got the saw going it cut through wood like a beaver on steroids. It starts better now, too."

On the "worst buy" side, "I expected too much when I bought a can of **Flex Seal**. My fault."

**David Sadler, Fithian, Ill.:** "My **Milwaukee** Fuel 18-volt, 1/4-in. cordless impact driver works great. Most of the company's Fuel class tools work great - they're lightweight, built strong, and last a long time."

"My **Milwaukee** 18-volt cordless grease gun was an exception, though. It was defective so the dealer sent it back for repairs. The company sent a new grease gun but it didn't work either, so the dealer sent it back and gave me a replacement. However, I'm still not getting the hang of using this tool and since a lot of the bearings are enclosed and sensitive to the amount of grease being applied, I've scrapped it and gone back to a tried-and-true hand pump grease gun. I own many **Milwaukee** cordless tools that work great, but this isn't one of them."

**Steven Shield, West Liberty, Iowa:** He likes the **Lynxx** 40-volt cordless pole saw he bought at **Harbor Freight**. "It cuts tree limbs up to 12 in. diameter with no problems, and the battery lasts about 2 1/2 years. After cutting a large tree down I just stand back and trim the branches off. I think a pole saw is much safer than tripping over branches with a chainsaw."

"I bought a **Vulcan** ladder at **Harbor Freight** for \$99, and it works as good as other ladders that sell for \$200 or more."

**Jamisen Fox, Pecatonica, Ill.:** "It's amazingly powerful and cuts as fast as my **Stihl** MS290, yet it weighs only 11 1/2 lbs.," says **Jamisen** about his **Makita** 18-volt cordless LXT brushless chainsaw equipped with a 14-in. bar. "This saw runs quiet and always starts. **Makita's** new twin battery series tools use the same batteries found in their 18-volt tools. I like how this saw performs."

**Lynn Willson, Eldora, Iowa:** A Korean war veteran, **Lynn** says an old **Hughes** H-5 helicopter he found in a barn is his "best buy". "The helicopter hadn't been flown in 39 years. I hauled it home and replaced the fluids, gave the engine a tune-up, and adjusted the rotor. Now it flies and handles extremely well."

"My **Husqvarna** 2654 lawn tractor equipped with a **Kohler** 26 hp. engine is my worst buy. At 33 hrs. the engine locked up, even though the oil had recently been changed at 26 hrs. I learned later that the engine had been recalled because of some problems."

**Earl Stegman, Thawville, Ill.:** "I use my **Milwaukee** M18 brushless Hackzell reciprocating saw on both wood and metal, and find that it reduces my pruning time by two thirds or more. The batteries last a long time, and are interchangeable with the company's M18 cordless drills and impact wrenches."

"I installed a **Trimble** EZ Steer assisted steering system on my old **Steiger** tractor. The system turns the steering wheel for you by combining a friction wheel and a motor with guidance from any compatible **Trimble** display. It worked so well that I also bought a system for my **White** 155 tractor, which I use with our soybean planter."

On the minus side, he lists his **Raven** Cruiser II SmartSteer auto steering system. "We had constant problems getting the light bar to work with the steering node. The company should have recalled this product. I was constantly on the phone talking with various dealers, tech people, and **Ag Express Electronics**. The **Raven** system did a good job when it worked, but unfortunately it worked only about 40 percent of the time."