

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

over 200,000 miles on it. I have only put brake pads on once. Otherwise, no problems.

"I have used **Case** tractors for over 40 years with no problems."

Art Malone, Lake Jackson, Texas: A 2012 **Kubota** L3800 4-WD tractor is a "best buy" for Art. "The tractor had less than 600 hrs. on it when I bought it two years ago. It's equipped with a quick connect bucket on the loader. This is a great attachment that's real fast and handy. It's economical to operate and has good power for a 3-cyl. diesel. I've had no problems with this unit."

On the negative side is a 2020 **Speed Queen** washing machine. "The stainless tub had a burr on one of the drilled holes and the first time it was used it damaged some clothes. The company sent a repairman out and they replaced the tub but would not do anything for the damaged clothes. It works but still tangles the clothes. I'm done with Speed Queen products."

Alan Jones, Mooresboro, N.C.: "I have purchased several **Milwaukee** M18 tools in the last six years, including a 1/2-in. hammer drill, a 1/4-in. impact driver, a side grinder, impact drawer and circular saw. All work well and the batteries last a long time before charging.

"**Stihl** products (chainsaws, backpack leaf blower and weed eater) all start easily and do an excellent job. I've had no problems with any of them."



Isaac Rankin, Swoope, Va.: "I've been wearing a multitool holster made by **Farm Tough Leatherworks** every day for over five years (www.farmtoughleather.com). I love that there are no flaps or snaps, just a big magnet inside that grabs my multitool and holds it 'til I need it. I've tried lots of store-bought holsters and these Farm Tough holsters are second to none.

"I have not been impressed with **DeWalt** cordless drills. The batteries go dead quickly and we've had a bunch of DeWalt drills stop working. I took them apart and there was nothing wrong that I could see; some fancy circuit board must have broken internally – so frustrating."

William Vineyard, Weiser, Idaho: "My 2012 **Kubota** 3200 is very good. It's easy to start and has had no problems. I like the power steering, HST transmission and 4-WD."

Loren Konda, Sherman, S. Dak.: "I've had my **Stihl** MS 290 chainsaw for 13 years and burned about 90 gals. of gas in it. The only thing that's ever been done to it is regular maintenance - a new air filter and plug. I'm very happy with it."

J. D. Grimes, Lake Villa, Ill.: "I was looking for better traction going up our sloped driveway. I bought the 2021 **Ariens** Compact 24 Rapidtrak snowblower because the back track wheel can be lifted to just move on the front track wheel, making it easier to turn it around in the garage without the engine running."

Patrick Smith, Beaufort, N.C.: "I only split around three cords per year, but the **Harbor Freight** electric log splitter has done all I've asked of it. I couldn't be more pleased. Plug it in and it splits."

Roger Ezell, Perry, Fla.: "We bought our 2018 **Subaru** Outback in 2019 with 7,000 miles. We take it back to Subaru for regular service and never had to spend money on anything other than regular maintenance. It has around 60,000 miles.



"I purchased a **Woodland Mills** sawmill in October and love it. It's well-built and high in quality – a very nice saw."

Vernon Mast, Ashland, Ohio: "My **MillerTech** #556 (2nd gen) headlamp was the best buy I've ever made. I'm a mechanic and don't understand how I did my job before I got this. It's made with military-grade aluminum and has a 5-yr. warranty. The rechargeable Li-ion battery lasts 5 hrs. on high and 120 hrs. on low. I liked it so much that I became a dealer."

Darrell Robertson, Cookeville, Texas: "My 2019 **Polaris** 570 side-by-side brings every time and is low maintenance. Being a mid-size makes it easy to run our 600 acres of fences and carry fencing gear to make repairs. The power steering is nice. It's a good buy.

"**Tractor Supply Co.** sells a **Traveller** 3,000-watt inverter. I bought it thinking it would have 3,000-watts available at the outlet. My small compressor requires 2,000-watts of power. After buying and mounting it on my truck, I found out it only has 1,500-watts per outlet. So, it's really a 1,500-watt 2-circuit. I should've looked closer at the box."

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Randall Spalding, Finley, Ky.: "My best buy is a **Kobalt** 40-volt pole saw I bought this summer. The battery lasts as long as I do."

Vance Rannels, New Plymouth, Ohio: A used **Case** 1294 tractor is Vance's "best buy". "It does everything I ask it to do."

He's disappointed with a used **Deere** 2510 tractor. "It has very little hydraulic capacity for the 3-pt. lift – even less than the last Deere that I sold because of poor hydraulics. The dealer has not been able to fix or adjust."



Leo Tavernetti, Atascadero, Calif.: "The **Miller Spectrum** 875 plasma cutter cuts very well. I got it from Amazon in four days when dealers said it would take six months or more to order one.

"The **HP OfficeJet Pro** 8025e printer would not work out of the box. Staples would not give our money back. They said we had to get it from HP – no luck."



Ravenkamp used barrels and belting from **Repurposed Materials** for auger hoppers and planter protectors that have lasted 20 years.

Repurposed Materials Still Going Strong

Scott Ravenkamp, Verdigre, Neb.: "The plastic barrels and conveyor belting that I bought from **Repurposed Materials** have been best buys (www.repurposedmaterialsinc.com; ph 303-288-1856). We have plastic barrels that are still in use as auger hoppers after many years of use. And we use rubber conveyor belting to protect our planter when planting into the previous year's standing corn stalks.

"I modified the barrels three different ways for augers that empty out bins and load trucks.

"With the first one, I cut away one end, laid it on the ground and cut a square hole in the top side for the bin auger spout. I stuck the loading auger in the end, and it worked, but grain spilled out around the loading auger, and it often tossed grain out the hole in the top of the barrel.

"I only cut part of the end out of the second barrel and then cut a notch in what was left for the auger to rest in. That took care of grain spilling out around the auger. Instead of cutting a square hole in the top, I made one cut in line with the barrel and two cuts across the end of the first cut. This created two 3-sided flaps. I heated the fourth side of the flaps with a torch and bent them back like wings. This kept grain from flying out and snow from blowing in.

"The first two designs fit under bin augers



Repurposed conveyor belting in the field.

that come out straight or only angle up slightly. I have some augers that angle up at 45 degrees as they leave the bin and have flexible drop tubes. While they worked with the first two designs, I customized my third design just for them.

"I cut and notched the end like I did for the second design and laid it on its side. On the top of the barrel, I cut a round hole to match the size of the drop pipe. The tight fit keeps the grain inside the hopper and keeps snow and debris out. It's almost watertight."

He ties rubber conveyor belting in place across the front of his planter when planting in cornstalk stubble, which can be 4 to 5-ft. tall.

"Without it, the stalks will wreak havoc on wiring and get jammed in under seed hoppers. Stalk debris even ends up in seed cups. It was a mess before I got the belting, which I've used for almost 10 years."

Wayne Lick, Mount Wolf, Penn.: "I cut a lot of wood to heat our old farmhouse and I really like and depend on my **Husqvarna** 545 and 460 chainsaws. Our Husky pole saw runs great, too.

"I detail cars, trucks, tractors, etc. and use products from **The Last Coat** – great stuff that can make an older vehicle or machine look like



new (www.thelastcoat.com; ph 833-852-2628)."

Bernard Paumier, Baltimore, Ohio: "We couldn't operate our farm without our 2010 **Kawasaki** Mule. It's a great machine."

Joseph Ronald Daigle, Sinclair, Maine: "My worst purchase is a 2021 **Deere** 4066R tractor built in 2021. Since I've had it, it's spent more time at the dealer than at my house. The minute I use it, it wants to fall apart. It's crazy to pay that kind of money and then not be able to use it."

Doug White, Unity, Sask.: "I bought a **Forney** battery charger with a 100 amp boost in about 1976 for around \$135.00. It's still going strong after all these years.

"When **Dodge** advertises their trucks as

'Ram tough' they may well be correct. We have a 2004 and a 2007 Ram 1500 with 5.7 Hemi engines. I bought the 2004 for my 16-year-old son for his first vehicle and the 2007 mega cab new. Both are still going strong."

Todd Eldred, Leslie, Mich.: "My **Deines** 1800KT 60-in. 18 hp. zero-turn lawn mower is over 25 years old and still cuts like a beast. Parts are on the shelf at my dealer. No trimming is required around the 40 plus trees in my yard as the mower is far in front."

Bobby F. Barrett, Cottage Grove, Tenn.: "My best buy is a **Hobart** welder I bought five or six years ago. I'm really a beginning welder but have built and repaired several things. It's worked really well."

Will Pilkington, Pennington, Ala.: "We have a **Lincoln** pneumatic grease gun, but you can't always bring the dozer back to the shop when it's time to grease it. The **Makita** XPG01Z 18-volt LXT grease gun is one of those purchases that will make you wonder why you didn't have it 10 years ago. No more hose and it's a breeze to load grease into. We've fought with that Lincoln for years - loading grease into it and trying to get the air out of it. You won't have that issue with the Makita.

"My 2021 **Wagner** FURNO 500 heat gun lasted three uses at which time the fan quit running. The company did send me another one after I paid to have the old one shipped back and a month doing without it. When you need something to work, you're counting on

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