

Simplicity tractor by making it possible to build up a new driveshaft for it. It works well and I'm still going through a learning curve with it. I purchased a digital readout for the vertical milling/drilling portion, and it helped greatly. A DRO for the x and y-axis would help a lot and that's next."

Douglas White, Unity, Sask.: "The only new item I've bought in a lot of years is a **Frontier 2072 3-point rough cut mower**. As I'm sure many of your readers will know, Frontier is owned by John Deere, so it's basically a Deere. Not a bad machine but couldn't be called a 'best buy'. It cuts decently but for some reason, the telescopic pto shaft will not go all the way back in and they can't say my tractor is too big for it as I use a 54 hp. Deutz on it. I bought a new **Woods M5 rough cut mower** in 1982 and still like it. It's a much better mower and still going strong. I would nominate it as a 'best buy'."



David Donarski, Minong, Wis.: "Before I retired, I was subscribing to at least 10 farm magazines. After I retired and was put on a fixed income, I could no longer afford all of them. Gradually, I cut back. The only one remaining is **FARM SHOW Magazine**. I get more than enough good ideas from your magazine to cover the cost. As long as I'm still up and around, I'll always have your magazine."

David Doherty, Lebanon, Ore.: David's "best buy" is a **Deere D125 riding mower**. "I mow approximately 4 1/2 acres all year. I've had other mower brands and none of them had the power or sustainability. All of the other ones had blades that would look like pretzles upon hitting a rock or stick but the Deere blades seem indestructible. They do need sharpening but have never bent. The only trouble I've had is with the belts. When I get something jamming the blades they will burn off if I don't shut down soon enough."



Jim Shelby, Nevada, Mo.: "I've been very pleased with the **Cutlass Deluxe** mower blades for my Deere mower (www.cutlassblades.com; 800-608-5973). I run about half throttle on the lawn but can cut heavier vegetation just as easily with more rpm's. They really throw the cut grass. They're also easy to take off and sharpen and put back on without any tools. I found them through **FARM SHOW** (Vol. 41, No. 5)."

Billy Tucker, Alamogordo, New Mexico: "My towable trencher from **Harbor Freight** works flawlessly in tight spaces. There is a Facebook group that's very helpful should repairs be needed or modifications made."

Joe McNabb, Grandview, Manitoba: "My worst buy was a new **Husqvarna 42-in. 1-cyl. Briggs and Stratton lawn tractor**. It almost shakes you apart it vibrates so much. The dealer finally exchanged it for a much better twin-cylinder."

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Ron Zimmerman, Mingoville, Penn.: "My 2020 **Earthquake 1/2-in. cordless impact** does more and is handier than my 1/2-in. pneumatic. The battery has a long life, too."

"**Warrior** drill bits for steel weren't sharp out of the box and won't retain a sharp point. I spend a lot of time and effort to keep bits sharp and these are disappointing."

Jordan Rosado, Pahoehoe, Hawaii: "The **Work Smart Ken Onion Edition knife sharpener** is shaped like a small band saw. It's generally well built and works very well. The instructions are easy to follow. After about two years, one of the drive pulleys broke. I emailed the company seeking to purchase replacement parts. Instead, they sent me a new device free of charge."

"My **Toro TimeCutter** zero-turn mower started breaking after about six months of use. The belt tensioner uses plastic pulleys that kept breaking. I had also purchased the extended warranty which was essentially useless. I had a very hard time finding anyone to repair the machine. After finally getting the machine repaired, it immediately broke again. This machine is only useful for light use on very small properties."

Dennis John Mitchell, Charleston, Tenn.: "My 2021 **Ruger Mini-14 5.56 rifle** has a lot of attachments made for it. The peep sight is great; it's the first ever I had on a rifle. It was easy to learn to use and is accurate with no kick. A child or woman could use it."

John Schwarzkopf, Rincon, Ga.: A **Deere 4044M tractor** with D170 loader, iMatch Quick-Hitch, and pallet forks is a "best buy" for John. "My 440M is a great all-around workhorse. The pallet forks save my back, and the Quick-Hitch makes hooking up implements much easier."

John also likes **Stihl** products. "Stihl saws have been a 'best buy' since I bought my first one while still in high school in 1977. I have an 039 that I bought in the mid-1990's that is still going strong. Our battery-powered leaf blower is a huge improvement over the gas-powered ones."

On the negative side are drill bits by **DeWalt** and **Milwaukee**. "If you are only drilling wood, they are acceptable. For drilling even thin steel they are so brittle they break constantly. They don't begin to compare to drill bits made 20 to 30 years ago. If I wanted cheap junk, I would buy bits at Harbor Freight. I've actually had better luck with their cheap bits than I've had with the name brands. At least if they break, I expect it."

Lucas Greff, Mott, N. Dak.: "My **Ford F-150** with 4.6L has been the most reliable vehicle I've owned. It's been in the family since it was new. It now has 120,000 miles with only regular maintenance. It's quite underpowered but with the few issues it's given me, I can't afford to move it down the road."

"The **Cabela's** size 32 meat grinder is advertised as 'commercial' and worked well for the first 30 min. each time I used it. It then progressively got weaker and weaker. After talking to the company rep, I found out the



KoMo medium grain mill (left) and KoMo FlicFloc flaker (right).

Kitchen Grain Mill, Flaker

Wendy Wellnitz, La Crescent, Minn.: "We love working with whole grains, baking with them and eating them. Our electric **KoMo grain mill** makes it easy to eat freshly ground grains year-round."

"We think freshly milled, whole-grain flour makes baked goods that taste better and are better for us than commercial flour. Unlike packaged flour, freshly milled flour has all the vitamins and minerals of the grain, not just the fraction found in commercial flours."

"Our **KoMo grain mill** is the medium, one of three models. It mills about 3 1/2 oz. of grain per min. The hopper holds about 30 oz. Composite millstones grind the grain. It's a compact milling unit inside a wood housing with a footprint a little larger than 6 by 6 in. It stands about 13-in. tall."

"We've been using the mill for more than nine years, and it's ground a lot of flour from many different grains. At \$420, it was a big investment, but it's more than paid for itself in great breads, muffins and more. The oat crust pizza we make with freshly milled whole wheat and oats can't be beat."

"Our hand-powered **FlicFloc 'flaker'** from **KoMo** is another best buy. The laminated wood base looks good and clamps to a kitchen counter. Oats trickle down into the tapered rollers that flake the oats and drop them into a bowl below. The hopper holds close to 6 oz., but we usually roll out half that or less, just enough for a bowl or two of oatmeal. It's a little more than 7-in. tall and has a footprint of just under 5 by 5 in."

"My husband and I have oatmeal four or five times a week. It only takes a couple of mins. to roll enough oat groats for a bowl, and the time is well spent."

"Commercial rolled oats have been steamed, rolled and then toasted. We think freshly rolled oats taste better and cook up with more texture."

"At \$170, the roller, like the grain mill, was a long-term investment. Like the mill, it's paid off. It can be used on other grains (not corn), oilseeds and herbs, but we use it mainly for oats. We may use commercial rolled oats for baking, but it's freshly rolled for breakfast."

duty cycle is only 60 percent. That's good for deer but not good enough for pig or beef."

Jason Donahoe, Platteville, Wis.: "I've had my **Worx 32-volt trimmer** for several years now and love it. It's way better than any gas-powered trimmer I had before. I can trim my two lots in town almost three times before I need to recharge it. String comes out when you pull the trigger so no 'bumping' is needed. A lifetime supply of string is a bonus from Worx as well."

Jason isn't as pleased with his **Porter-Cable 20-volt circular saw**. "I received the 5-piece tool set as a gift. The drill driver, impact drill, reciprocating saw and vibratory tool work flawlessly, but the circular saw was a real letdown. It junked out altogether during a remote project where I didn't have access to power. What a disappointment."

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Jeff Hoekje, Burton, W. Va.: "My five **Stihl chainsaws** have cut timber and firewood and helped with storm cleanup and general farm work. They've never failed to start and run even at -15 F. Best saws ever."

WD-40 can be found on Jeff's "worst buys" list. "Every can I've bought ran out of propellant and wouldn't spray."

Francis Lucht, Milford, Ill.: "My **Ferris IS3100Z 30-hp. zero-turn mower** has plenty of power. It has coil/over shock independent suspension which makes for a much smoother ride."

Stanley Bruce, Billings, Mont.: "I bought a used **Snap-on pistol grip ratcheting screwdriver (SSDMRE4)** on eBay. I bought it after attempting to use about 10 other types of small grip ratcheting screwdrivers. It can be used with one hand in small spaces. Mostly I repair small, difficult-to-reach things or do stuff like repair damaged siding on my house. This type of tool accomplishes such work much more efficiently than anything else I have used."

"My 2020 **Ativa 12-sheet Micro-Cut Shredder (A12MC19)** worked for the first few sheets of paper. About the third time I used the shredder, I attempted to run through about 10 sheets of paper. The horizontal cross-cut teeth jammed with the fixed vertical teeth. I couldn't get it unjammed. I donated the shredder to a recycling place and bought a vertical cut paper shredder – good enough for what I do."

Jim Deardorff, Chillicothe, Mo.: "This year I bought a new **Deere air compressor** and wish I had bought it years ago. Even though I have a large portable air compressor that I sandblast with, it's way too big for my spray gun. The Deere model is just right for spraying paint. It always starts, even in cold weather, and has more than enough pressure and air volume to run my industrial spray guns. A lot of people make the mistake of buying an air compressor that can produce 120 psi air pressure but fail to take into account that air volume (measured in cubic feet per minute) is also very important. I am pleased with this compressor and would recommend it to anyone that needs a reliable air source."