

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

180-acre farm with over 15,000 hrs. on the meter. We have never done anything to the engine. It doesn't need any engine oil added from one oil change to the next. I still love to use the machine."

Dan Tobbe, Horseheads, N.Y.: "I like my **Ferris** zero-turn mower I bought three years ago. I mow five acres of lawn. I went from 8 hrs. of mowing down to 3 1/2 hrs. It has the best ride of all the zero-turns I tested."

Richard N. Burgett, Milton, Fla.: "My 2022 **Maytag** commercial-grade washing machine handles big loads of laundry very well and has a 10-year extended warranty."

Richard hasn't been as pleased with other washing machines. "About three years ago I purchased a **Samsung** washer that had a 3-year warranty and that's how long it lasted. Before that, I bought a **Whirlpool** washer and it lasted about five years until the warranty ran out. It suddenly flooded my house. When I took it apart to troubleshoot it, I found the outer tub had a hole in it. The drive coupler on the inner tub had deteriorated to pieces and had knocked a hole in the outer tub. Both components were unavailable, but they still made the machine. Go figure."

Ken Douglas, Dawson, Texas: "My **Spartan** zero-turn mower is the best piece of equipment I've bought in a long time. It cuts and rides like a dream."

"My worst purchase was a **Bad Boy** zero-turn mower. I'll never have another one - cheaply made."

Carvel Cheves, Bunn, N.C.: A **Makita** 18-volt LXT Lithium-Ion Cordless Inflator (Model DMP180ZX) is a "best buy" for Carvel. "With little expectation, I tried it on one of my big tractor tires and it did the job. It's not really fast but is efficient and mighty handy. It beats having to drag out an air tank."

A **Husqvarna** 320iL Cordless Handheld Blower Kit with battery and charger did not meet Carvel's expectations. "The battery is the Achilles' heel of this blower. It overheats quickly with full volume, continuous duty and takes about an hour to cool down and recharge. I was lucky to get 5 min. of blowing, certainly not enough to blow off most hay equipment before storing. Their battery chainsaw uses the same battery with the same problem. No more Husky battery stuff for me - going blue all the way."

Steve Veenstra, Middleville, Mich.: "My 2021 **Ryobi** 18-volt 100 mph leaf blower is fast to grab and do small jobs without pulling out the gas unit that takes time to start and warm up."



David Loxam, Cochrane, Alberta: "I subscribe to and read **FARM SHOW** thoroughly for the simple pleasure of seeing what innovators think up, make, fix and modify for better performance or use at home, in the shop or in the field. All good stuff. I'm retired and live in town, so have no application for the subjects. But keep 'em coming."

Ed Libke, Edgewood, Texas: "My 2021 **Deere** 5075E utility tractor is the perfect size for my ranch. It's able to do all that is needed. The cab with a/c, heat and a radio make it comfortable, and the view is good out every window and door. The loader, with

its attachments, is very handy and useful."

Ed hasn't been as happy with his **Honda** weed eater (model HHT31S). "It's had three new carburetors - one under warranty and two more after Honda said it was just underpowered and there was nothing they could do about it. I bought a **Husqvarna** after that and am very pleased with that one and just bought another **Stihl** powerhead with weed eater and tiller attachments and am very pleased with them."

Kevin V. Cox, Tioga, La.: "I had a 2018 **GMC** 2500 HD with the Duramax diesel in it. It was powerful and had amazing fuel economy for a 3/4-ton truck. I had zero issues with it. When I traded it, it had 92,000 miles on it. The dealer gave me more for it than I paid when I bought it. The only reason I traded was that I moved, and it wouldn't fit in the garage of my new house. I would recommend it to anyone."



Paul Stanley, Maple Ridge, B.C.: "My 'best buy' is a pair of 12-in. **Magnum** fractional calipers that I purchased at KMS Tools in Canada. The calipers can read millimeters, decimal inches and fractional inches and you can read depths with them. Some digital calipers do not allow for that."

Richard Posey, Crossville, Tenn.: "I bought my **Stihl** MS 261 C-M chainsaw new in 2021. It appears to 'out saw' my old Husky 346XP which was really fast. I enjoy cutting with it. It will easily cut 12-in. hardwood."

Frank Servino, Roy, Wash.: "I bought a used **Toyota** forklift from the dealer near me. It's been one of the most reliable forklifts I've had for my feed store."

"I upgraded the hp. of my **Kubota** tractor from 29 to 39 hp. I should've kept the smaller one. With all of the environmental modifications on the new machine, it has no more power than the old one."

Bill Fraize, South Windsor, Conn.: "I purchased a **Deere** 5103 new in 2006. The fenders on the tractor rusted. They had multiple holes larger than 6 in. and the fender brackets were rusted through. The local JD and Corporate would not replace them but would sell me new ones at \$1,500 per fender, not installed. I have a couple of Case and Ford 8N tractors, and their fenders are still solid. I finally had to sell the 5103 with 300 hrs. for one-third what I paid new."

Jack Hansen, Sulphur, La.: "My 2013 **Kubota** M9960 has plenty of power in the hayfield. I've had no problems and have done nothing other than oil changes and replaced the roof and hood compliments of hurricane Laura."

Laurence Danby, Victoria, B.C.: "My older **Kiotti** DK55 tractor with shuttle and cab is my 'best buy'. I've owned four other tractors, and this is by far the best. It's warm in winter and cool in summer. It has a foot gas pedal like a car, self-leveling bucket and quick attach on the front. It also has four hydraulic lines in back and two in front. It starts right up after two glow plug applications."

Tom Surkon, Salmon Arm, B.C.: "In 2012, I factory ordered a **Ford** F-150 SuperCab with heavy GVW and tow package. In 125,000 km it has only been back to the dealer once for a transmission recall that took half an hour."



Blue shop towels with a thin layer of grease work well to keep cylinders clear of debris.

Tool Makes Engine Clean Up Easier

Engine repair goes a lot faster for Dale McLaen since he added a gasket scraper to his toolbox.

"The **Snap-on** CSSD1 gasket scraper with its carbide blade was a 'best buy' for me," says McLaen. "It's machined perfectly flat on the end and square on all the edges. I use it to remove the remains of gaskets from engine blocks and heads."

McLaen notes that because it is as flat as the engine head sealing surfaces, it can shave off even the smallest and thinnest pieces of gaskets. This eliminates a big share of prep time before reinstalling heads.

"The carbide blade is razor-sharp, so you do need to be careful not to scratch or gouge the sealing surfaces, especially on aluminum heads," warns McLaen. "However, once you get the hang of using it, you'll find it makes removal of gaskets fast and easy."

Cleaning up debris is another time-consuming task, whether removing gaskets or doing other repairs on an engine block with open cylinders. For decades, McLaen relied on stuffing cylinders with rags to keep out debris.

"Now I cut a disc out of a blue shop towel that is about 1/2-in. bigger than the cylinder bore and coat the outer edge of this with a thin layer of motor assembly grease," says McLaen. "I place the paper towel grease-side-down on top of the piston and press down on the edges."

When finished working, simply remove the towels from each cylinder and wipe the walls clean.

"Another trick to removing debris or traces



Snap-on CSSD1 gasket scraper.

of coolant that have gotten down around the edge of a piston is to use compressed air," says McLaen. "Hold a good-sized blow nozzle about 1/2-in. above the center/top of the piston and direct a jet of air at it. As the air rushes back out of the cylinder, it creates a Venturi effect that will pull out almost everything that got into the gap and is lying on the top of the upper piston ring."

As a final step in cleanliness, he recommends lightly oiling cylinder walls. "Rotate the crank one revolution and then recheck for any last traces of crud before reinstalling the head," says McLaen.

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learning to split, there are many 'over-strikes' where the first thing to contact the wood is the handle. No problem with this axe. Great product."

John Mathis, Smithland, Ky.: "I bought a used **Deere** M655 zero-turn mower in 2002. I've only had to invest in a set of belts and a set of blades. We mowed an acre plus for years and now we mow several acres on our farm. A great unit."

John hasn't had such a positive experience with **Farm Innovators'** heated pet bowls. "Of the four I bought, two of these bowls failed during the first winter and one other failed the following winter. I have one left that's still working on season three. I'm a little disappointed in the quality."

James Ayers, Moosup, Conn.: "My **Milwaukee** drill and driver set has tons of power and a long battery life."



Roger Gehrig, Menomonie, Wis.: "I purchased the **Fiskars** X25 Splitting Axe for my 14-year-old son. It has a lighter, slimmer profile head and a 28-in. handle that's much more manageable than an 8 or 10-lb. splitting maul. He swings it with confidence and enjoys splitting piles of wood. When you're