

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

**Roger Berkoski, Cantril, Iowa:** "In 2006, I bought a zero-turn 52-in. **Snapper** and have only replaced two drive belts. Two years ago, I bought a 52-in. **Ferris ISX**, which is another great machine."

**Gary Russell, Allouez, Mich.:** "I have used my 2020 **Cen-Tec 3-in-1** portable jump pack numerous times with great satisfaction ([www.harborfreight.com](http://www.harborfreight.com)). It's powerful enough to start engines with dead batteries. I use it consistently with my **Deere 425** tractor that I use to blow snow. It's kept me from having to buy a new battery for several years. It's a great value for the price I paid."

"**Loctite Super Glue Gel Control** doesn't hold anything together. I'm not happy with it all."



**Joshua Wilhelm, New Bavaria, Ohio:** "My **Liberator Rocket Heater** is a great stove. It heats the house nicely and cleans out more easily than the wood stove I used to have (<https://rocketheater.com>; ph 573-468-0204).

"The **Hud-Son** Sawyer sawmill is a great saw for the price you pay ([www.hud-son.com](http://www.hud-son.com); ph 800-765-7297).

**Kelly J. Rogers, Springtown, Texas:** "The **Shelby** trailer flooring in my stock trailer is non-slip and foot proof ([www.shelbytrailer.com](http://www.shelbytrailer.com); ph 580-252-2922). It should last longer than the trailer itself."

**Joseph E. Athens, Bowdoin, Maine:** Joseph's 2010 **Cub Cadet/Yanmar Ex3200** hydrostatic sub-compact diesel tractor with loader rates as a best buy. "It starts without glow plugs any time of the year and has the original battery. It has many uses."

**Robert Nebhan, New Albin, Iowa:** "My 1976 **Bobcat 620** skid loader has become one of my 'best friends'. It never fails. I have a long steep gravel driveway. I can plow snow, drag, level, and backfill. It has over 3,000 hrs. with only a few minor repairs. It has a Wisconsin VH4D that I'd converted back to gas after spending most of its life in a barn running on propane. We love 'Betsy.' There aren't many 620s around, so I'm always looking for spare parts."

**William Short, Rapid City, S.D.:** "My 2020 **Honda** Ridgeline pickup is a best buy. We had four Dodge Ram pickups in the past. They were excellent trucks, but we found the Ridgeline serves the same need, gets better mileage, and fits our garage."

**Thomas Smith, Moodus, Conn.:** "My best buy is an L35 **Kubota** backhoe and loader tractor that I've used for loading logs onto my Wood-Mizer saw, digging the basement for my house, and hauling a lot of rocks. It was very dependable without any breakdowns."

"I'm handicapped so I made a winch system to lift myself onto the seat. I did that by installing a 3-in. I beam on the ROPS with bearings so it could move back and forth. Then I made a trolley that would hold a winch so I could hook a cable up to my Hoyer seat and lift myself onto the tractor

seat. I double-lined the winch cable to slow down the speed. I raised the seat with a 2 by 4 so when I swung onto the seat, I'd clear the fender. When I was on the tractor seat, I could move the I-beam in, so it didn't extend outside the width of the wheels. I never had any problems with the tractor, and it was easy to shift. I could reach the 4-WD lever, the throttle and shift the gears, but I did need to add a length of pipe to the foot brake so I could control it with my hand. I even used the winch to lower myself onto a crawler and could even change the oil on the tractor."



**Lori Lynn Parkin, Tremont, Ill.:** "**Pilot Knob Restorations** in Galena, Ill. is a great supplier of quality replacement and OEM parts for International and Farmall tractors ([www.pilotknobrestorations.com](http://www.pilotknobrestorations.com); ph 815-777-0826). I've used them often for new, used, and hard-to-find parts. They've been in business since 1997, and in 2008 Andy Berlage, son of the owners, started Blackjack Machine, a CNC shop that enables them to produce more products in-house. Andy and Donna Berlage now own and operate the Pilot Knob business. Pilot Knob offers machining services to repair worn parts, and they can also build custom parts and rare originals. I recently purchased an oil filter kit for my Farmall 1206, and it fit perfectly. The install took less than 30 min. to complete."

**Ryan Solberg, Goodridge, Minn.:** "The power steering and hydraulic deck lift on my **Deere X540** lawn mower work great. Lets me give my yard a golf course finish."

Ryan isn't pleased with his **Arctic Cat DVX 250 4-wheeler**. "The design is poor, and it has a lot of transmission problems. It doesn't stand up well at all. Arctic Cat needs to develop pride in their products again."

**Earl Berry, Batesburg, S.C.:** "My **DeWalt 18-volt** reciprocating saw is a sorry saw. It'll run for about 1 min. and quit. I bought two new batteries, but they were no help."

**Steven Micah Lapp, New Holland, Penn.:** "I have a couple of best buys. I subscribed to **FARM SHOW** just this year, and it's well worth it. I've gotten many ideas to make life easier on the farm."

"My **DeWalt** impact has proved itself very reliable. It has great torque, and I like the three mode lights. It was left out in the rain one day, but it still works fine. Great product."

**Daryl Reynolds, Oneonta, N.Y.:** "My 2016 **Ferris** zero-turn has cut my time mowing in half."

"In the spring, we had a bad snowstorm, so I had a lot of pine trees down. My 2022 **Stihl MS250** chainsaw performed better than I thought for a mid-sized saw."

**Blaine Anderson, Friend, Neb.:** Blaine's the satisfied owner of a 2022 **Ford** Maverick XLT with a 2.0-liter turbo. "I love this little truck. It's just the right size, drives great, and has plenty of zip. It gets 27 mpg overall. My only dislike is the switchblade-style ignition key. I wish it had the starter button type ignition."



Endura 370G Welding gloves and Knipex Cobra pliers are best buys for Allaway.

## Shop Tool Best Buy

**Reid Allaway, les Cedres, Quebec:** "I have a lot of excellent tools that work great, but my **Knipex Cobra** adjustable pliers are exceptional in every way ([www.knipex.com](http://www.knipex.com)). They're stronger, tougher, lighter, and have more bite than similar-sized channel locks. Better yet, they can be adjusted with one hand. The picture shows a 10 in./250 mm model, and they're a great general-purpose size that also fits in a long pocket, if only

barely. I've used these for several years, and they never fail to get the job done."

"I also like my **Endura 370G** welding gloves from **Superior gloves** ([www.superiorglove.com/products/endura-370gfl/](http://www.superiorglove.com/products/endura-370gfl/)). They fit exceptionally well and allow good dexterity for MIG and TIG work. Heat protection is very good. These gloves are super comfortable and not all that expensive (around \$25 USD)."

**Jeff W. Brown, Huntersville, N.C.:** A 2002 **New Holland TN55D** tractor rates as Jeff's worst buy. "Everything works well except the electronic power shift shuttle. Always buy a mechanical shuttle. Anything with a computer can have an expensive failure."

**Richard Caldwell, Bethany, W.Va.:** "My 2020 **Hypertherm 45 XP** plasma cutter cuts metal effortlessly and easily. It's easy to operate, handle, and move."

**Zachary Garman, East Earl, Penn.:** Zachary nominates his 2021 **Kubota SVL75-2** skid loader with an enclosed cab as a best buy. "It's been very reliable. With the tracks, we can do almost anything."

Zachary isn't pleased with his 2005 **Deere 250** wheel loader. "We were constantly replacing hoses, and the controls were fatiguing. The lights gave us no end of trouble."

**Gary Ahlbrecht, Brownton, Minn.:** "My **Toro Titan** zero-turn lawn mower does what I expect it to do. The 26-hp. Kohler v-twin is powerful and always starts. It cut my mowing time almost in half. I had a **Toro Proline 120** that I was very happy with."

"I've also been pleased with my **Kubota BX2360** lawn tractor and 54-in. wide snowblower. Its powerful 3-cyl. diesel engine starts well in cold weather and runs cheap. With the snowblower on the front, the power steering is awesome. I have a **Curtis** hard-side cab on it, and I hardly need to turn on the heater on sunny days."

**Bill Weber, West Seneca, N.Y.:** "My **Deere Gator** was expensive, but it's very dependable. I just do oil changes and regular, limited maintenance. They're quality machines."

"My 2022 **Poulan** chainsaw is the same size as my old one but has limited power. It had to be tweaked to get it running right."

**Richard Monte, Jersey Shore, Penn.:** "My **Deere 4475** skid steer is a best buy. It's used daily to move round bales."

**Steve Stone, Aitkin, Minn.:** "I repowered my **Deere 318** garden tractor with a **Vanguard 18-hp** engine. It has much more power and is quieter and more fuel efficient. The engine switch didn't take long at all."

"My **Craftsman** ratcheting wrenches were poor quality. The ratcheting parts quit working far too soon."

**Harry T. Griffin, Troy, Tenn.:** "My **Kobalt 40-watt** battery-powered weed eater will last 2 hrs. on a charge and uses less string than other models. It's a best buy."

**Barton Gessaman, Troy, Ohio:** "My **Stihl 10-ft.** battery-powered pole saw with micro chain runs all day on a single charge. It cleanly and quickly cuts anything it can reach. It's easy to use and maintain."

**Jeffrey S. Lantz, Converse, Ind.:** "My 2021 **Deere 2032R** with loader and 60-in. mowing deck has lots of power and torque. It's easy to get on and off. There's lots of lifting capacity, and the breakout force of the loader is impressive for this size tractor."

Jeffrey is dissatisfied with his **Timpte** hopper bottom trailer. "I've owned Timpte trailers for years. I usually trade every other year. The quality has diminished on each one. The last one had paint coming off around all the rivets, bolts were missing, rivets popped, lights failed, and had loose air fittings, all in the first 6 mos. The axles and brakes looked like they were sandblasted. The warranty wouldn't cover the paint even though it says clearly 'paint on all metal for 1 year.'"

**Robert K. Farrington, Clinton, Ind.:** "My 1995 **Toyota T100 4x4** has 400,000 miles and is still going strong. Everything works."

**Rodney L. Kyle, Hot Springs, Va.:** Rodney's the owner of a 2006 **Exmark Z60** commercial-grade zero-turn dual gas tank 60-in. deck mower. "I keep five 4-acre lawns mowed on our family farm that take 14 hrs. to complete (thus the need for dual tanks). Other than belts every year, one set of tires, two new sets of blades, and a new engine 2