

# Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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"I also like my **Kawasaki Mule** that I purchased used. We've only had to install a new battery. At 89 years old, it's my second set of legs."

## "At 89 years old, it's my second set of legs."

**Dennis Robinson, Harrisburg, S.D.:** "My worst buy is my 2010 **Ford F-250 SuperCab** diesel. The truck drives nice but drinks fuel like crazy. The best mileage I've gotten with it is 15 mpg. It's much worse when pulling, most likely from the lack of horsepower. I bought this truck brand new and was told the mpg would get better when I hit 30,000 miles. At this point, I only have 50,000 miles on it because it costs too much to drive."

**Ron Pulkrabek, Glencoe, Minn.:** "I've had a few standout best buys in my 85 years. I used my 1969 **Deere 4020** diesel for 46 years. It never needed motor work; only a clutch and the hydraulic pump fixed."

"My 1955 **Ford 860** was used for 60 years with no major problems. It was a safe tractor for my wife and daughters to operate. It had standing room for passengers and was easy to get on and off."

"Finally, my 1999 **Chevy S-10** had no major problems in 21 years. With care, it pulled 100-bushel gravity boxes to town."

**John Classen, Nisswa, Minn.:** "My **Bauer** 20-volt 1/4-in. hex compact impact driver from Harbor Freight has plenty of power and the battery lasts a long time. It also charges quickly. I do a lot of small engine repair and it removes bolts and screws with no problem."

**Mike Joebgen, Sumner, Iowa:** "I have a 1989 **Ford F-350** with uncountable miles. It still starts well and runs great. It has a 9-ft. box with a hoist. It works great for small loads of dirt."



Photo Courtesy of Small Farmers Journal

**Raymond Mast, Cashton, Wis.:** "I purchased a **White Horse 715** plow in 2018. I've been impressed with the job it's done. It's very enjoyable to operate."

**Andy Miller, East Bernstadt, Ky.:** "My best buy is a 2020 **Vulcan OmniPro 220 MIG** welder from Harbor Freight. I was starting up a new welding/machine shop on a limited budget and this machine has exceeded my expectations. At \$1,150 with the 2-year no-questions-asked warranty, it was well worth the money. The digital readout with quick-adjust features saved a lot of learning time."

**Jeremy Weaver, Penn Yan, N.Y.:** "My **New Holland BB940A** large square baler is a best buy. It has made more than 100,000 bales and is still going strong. My former boss had two identical balers which are also at around 100,000 bales and still going."

"Another best buy is my **Deere 6920S** IVT tractor which I use to run the NH baler. It has almost 18,000 hrs. and we haven't touched the engine. The transmission was rebuilt at about 14,000 hrs. This tractor is tough as nails."

**Wayne Miller, Westhope, N.D.:** "My 1979 1/2-ton pickup is used all the time because it's easy to fix when there's trouble. The pickup box is low so it's easy to put things in. It's also easy to get in and out of because of the nice size doors. It has power steering and seat lap belts."

**Tim Ojala, New Ipswich, N.H.:** "I bought a used 2000 **Kubota M9000** tractor in 2005. It was like new with 180 hrs. It now has 1,300 hrs. but has needed no repairs. I've only done regular maintenance and replaced the battery."

"I like my wood splitter from **Harbor Freight** with a Predator engine. After sitting for about 10 mos., it started on the second pull. It has a double-edge moving blade and stops at both ends so it splits in both directions. I haven't seen this splitter in their catalogs or ads lately."

**Randy Verges, Baraboo, Wis.:** "I've used my **Stihl MS310** hard since I bought it in 2000, cutting 10 to 12 cords of wood per year. I've only done minor maintenance. It starts with a few pulls and digs right in."



**Roman Yoder, Hutchinson, Kan.:** "I like my **Milwaukee Fuel 1/2-in.** and **3/8-in.** impact wrenches. The big one has a lot of torque. The small one is lighter but still has lots of torque and you can get into smaller places."

"My **Bergman Manufacturing** tractor auto hitch is heavy-duty, and it hooks up every time. It's a real time saver."

**Reuben Miller, Leesburg, Ind.:** "My **Case IH Farmall 70A** tractor has had very little warranty/maintenance issues. I've put about 1,600 hrs. on it in 3 years."

**Gerard E. Ouellette, Richmond, Maine:** "I've had no problems after 200 hrs. with my 2020 **Kioti 46** hp. tractor with loader. It has side-to-side hydro pedals with electronic touch and an outside 3-pt. hitch handle. Regeneration is automatic. The service people are great."

"I wasn't happy with my **Massey Ferguson 36**-hp. tractor. The front remotes were in the wrong place. It always had trouble with regeneration and in the shop, I couldn't idle down with it. I sold it."

"My **Kubota B2920** was a nice tractor except for the forward and reverse pedals. You have to use your heel to go backward. It was very awkward with old legs. I also sold this one."

**Neil Stemann, Red Wing, Minn.:** "Our 2020 **Whirlpool** clothes washer (WTW5005KW) doesn't clean clothes properly and they come out of the washer twisted and almost knotted together. It takes a long time to complete wash and rinse cycles. We haven't gotten a good explanation of problems from Whirlpool reps. We've also corresponded with Consumer Reports with no luck. We previously owned an earlier Whirlpool model which was perfect until a clutch failed after 22 years of use."

**John Bullock, Oshkosh, Wis.:** "My **DR** power grader, Premier EZ Dial model, is easy to use. I had huge potholes in my 1,200-ft. driveway and had 42 tons of gravel delivered. The grader did a great job of leveling and filling holes."



Tom Hohl's SawStop table saw and router table.

## Best Buy Shop Saw

**Tom Hohl, Hermantown, Minn.:** "I've used several types and brands of saws for many different woodworking projects over the years, but my absolute favorite is my **SawStop Professional Cabinet Saw**. The blade will stop in less than five milliseconds because a pulsed electrical signal transmitted through the blade recognizes the difference between wood and flesh on a person's finger. The blade stops and retracts back into the table in what I'd call an 'instant'."

"I have several electrically conductive blades with different kerfs that I use for ripping or cross-cutting different types of wood. Non-conductive blades won't work. The SawStop is very well made, has plenty of power from the 3-hp. motor, and is easy to calibrate for small, medium, or large cuts."

"The 36-in. wide table is very solid. The saw is easy to move by lowering the retractable wheels. I've used the saw to rip and crosscut dry and green lumber into pieces just 1/8 in. wide. There's never any binding or

burning because the fence and rail are very substantial and lock into place on both sides of the table without any play."

"I've used several different blades and the saw performs flawlessly. The dust collector works very well so my shop stays clean no matter what type of wood I'm cutting."

"Thankfully, I've never used the blade stop feature, but I know it works because you can test it with a hot dog."

"I recently bought a router table for my saw. It mounts securely to the left side of the table with four bolts and stands on two adjustable legs, so it's perfectly aligned with the saw table. Using this for routing collects the dust and lumber chips and is far easier than working on a separate table with a vise and clamps to hold the material."

"This whole setup is more expensive than other saws without the stop feature, but I think it's well worth the investment. Lower priced portable and smaller SawStop models would also be worth looking at."



**Cliff Fivecoat, Emmett, Idaho:** "My best buy is an **All American Sharpener** lawn mower blade sharpener guide (Model 5002 Gen 2). Once set up, you can choose what blade angle you want to cut and repeat it exactly over and over. It's fast and easy to use with a flapper disc of 40 to 60 grit and 4 to 1/2-in. hand grinder."

**Terri Solarski, Browns Mills, N.J.:** "I love my **Massey Ferguson** backhoe tractor. This little tractor fulfills all my needs on my little farm. She's a workhorse."

**Michael Everett, Canton, Texas:** "I bought a **Kubota BX1500** in August 2003. This little tractor still runs great with very little maintenance. All major parts including the engine, transmission, and gears are original and work great. It's a wonderful little tractor but unfortunately, it's not made anymore."

**James Spalding, Finley, Ky.:** "My **Kobalt 40-volt** pole saw is a best buy. The battery lasts for as long as I can work."

**Michael J. Gregg, Boelus, Neb.:** "My 1999 **Ford 3/4-ton Power Stroke** pickup is absolutely my best buy. I purchased it with 50,000 miles on it in 2000. It now has 440,000 miles with no major repairs. Regular oil changes, brakes and tires were my only expenses. It still has plenty of power to pull my **Deere 410** backhoe which weighs approximately 18,000 lbs."



**Colin Partridge, Stillwater, Minn.:** "Tanglefoot insect barrier is a sticky paste that you brush onto tree trunks to catch cankerworms, weevils, caterpillars, cutworms, and other pests ([www.tanglefoot.com](http://www.tanglefoot.com); ph 888-295-6902). The product has been on the market for more than 100 years. I've found that it also works great to keep