

Best Buy Mini Thresher



Alloway made a few modifications to his low-cost multi-crop thresher, saving him time and money.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Reid Alloway, Tourne-Sol Cooperative Farm, 1025 Chemin St-Dominique, les Cedres, Quebec, Canada JTT 1P5 (ph 450-452-4271; info@fermetournesol.qc.ca; www.fermetournesol.qc.ca).

91 R trimmer are the best equipment I've ever had. They start well and are great quality."

On the negative side is Russell's **Cub Cadet** 42-in. tractor lawn mower he purchased new 3 years ago. "I mow about 1 1/2 hrs. each time. I used it for 2 years when a bolt broke on the idler wheel that runs the belt. Next, a bearing came loose in the spindle. I shimmed a bearing in the spindle. Then, the front deck wheel broke off. I made a bracket and bolted it on. Then, both hangers that hold the back deck broke, and I had to fix them. I take care of my equipment. I now own a 42-in. **Deere** riding mower. I've had no problems with it."

William Mader, Omer, Mich.: "My **Gateway** GWTC116-2BL touchscreen laptop worked great at first. Then, it would start going into sleep mode, and I had to force the power off and restart. Shortly after that, the internal Wi-Fi adapter would start dropping connections. I added an external USB Wi-Fi unit and disabled the internal Wi-Fi unit, and the problem was resolved. It still shuts down or locks up occasionally—very frustrating."



Keith Ambrose, Charleston, Ill.: "I've had several recent best buys. My **NOCO** GB70 and GB40 HD battery boosters are much easier and more convenient than jumper cables. The GB70 will start almost anything up to big trucks or tractors."

"My **Milwaukee** M18 heavy-duty tire inflator is small enough to keep in the car or pickup but powerful and fast enough to inflate all but the largest tires."

"My **Stihl** GTA 26 pruner/mini chainsaw will handle almost all trimming jobs around the house and will easily handle 2 to 3-in branches and limbs. It's great for fast and easy cleanup after a storm."

"Finally, my **EGO** 56-volt string trimmer with self-threading string feeder is lighter and quieter than my **Stihl** gas trimmer. The battery lasts a long time, just right for a 79-year-old."

"All these tools were reasonably priced at Ace Hardware, Rural King, or battery stores. I recommend any of these to anyone looking for a reliable and lighter tool."

Jim Lacey, Dell Rapids, S.D.: "Our smaller 1 1/2-in., 18-volt **Milwaukee** impact wrench is light and powerful. We purchased the big 1 1/2-in. unit years ago, but it needed service. So we bought the smaller one. Now, the bigger one sits on the shelf. The repairs were surprisingly cheap at only \$100."

Jim hasn't been happy with his **Hustler** rear discharge mower. "First off, I had to make the front axle pivot up and down so a person could ride it (Vol. 47, No. 4). Then, I put 'gator' blades on. The machine just brushes the grass. My wife won't let me mow anywhere out front with it. We have three green and yellow ones with hundreds of hours on them. The hustler has 11, and it's for sale."

Warren Schatz, Ipswich, S.D.: "I like my **Deere** Z345M zero-turn mower with bagging system. It needs no wrenches to install baggers and mows nicely."

"I work on lawn mowers and small engines. Why can't the engineers design a product with 1 in. belt lengths (increments of 1 in.)? Purchasing 1-in. length belts in a small town is hard enough, but when the mower or engine

has a 96 1/2-in. or 58 1/4-in. belt, it's almost impossible. You have to purchase it directly from the manufacturer."

Rodger W. Bennett, Berlin, Md.: "My 2023 60-volt **Harbor Freight** Atlas battery-operated string trimmer won't release new string. I've done everything that I can with no results."

Joseph Zook, Locke, N.Y.: Joseph is the satisfied owner of a 2022 **Stihl** MS 500i chainsaw as a best buy. "As a logger, my chainsaw earns my bread and butter, and this one is undoubtedly my best buy so far. It starts easily, accelerates super fast, and is a serious powerhouse. Best of all, in the 2 years I've had it, I've had zero problems."

"I'm disappointed in my **Crescent Tools** chainsaw files. Even when new, they didn't file."

Arlen Hofman, Sanborn, Iowa: "In October 2021, I traded my Can-Am Outlander Max for a **Hisun** 48-volt side-by-side UTV. The fact that it was completely electric with eight 6-volt batteries is what sold me on it. This turned out to be my worst buy."

"It was well-engineered, responsive, quiet, and recharged overnight. It was advertised as having a driving range of up to 40 miles. I bought it to check my cow herd, a roundtrip of 12 miles. Sometimes, even with a full charge, I didn't think I'd make it home as the batteries were nearly dead."

"The dealer and the Hisun company wouldn't stand behind it. I had to sell it at an online auction and lost many dollars. Hisun is a Chinese manufacturer who makes the parts in China and ships them to an assembly plant in McKinney, Texas. All I could get from the company was, 'Your batteries must be bad and need to be replaced.' These were new batteries in a new machine. Replacing the batteries would cost \$2,000 without guaranteeing I'd get a better driving range. No, thank you. Buyer beware—buy American."

Kaleb Wolf, Lu Verne, Iowa: "I bought a wonderful front wheel assist tractor from **Case IH**. It's a wonderful running tractor that's fuel efficient and pulls great."

Warren Zimmerman, Wheeling, Mo.: "My **Skil** Self-Leveling Green Cross Line rechargeable laser with a tripod is simple to set up and bright enough to use in sunlight at short distances. It can be turned on without leveling for a straight line and can replace a chalk line in some applications without leaving behind a chalk line. There are no batteries to change. It was reasonably priced. It might not be for heavy professional use, but it shines in homeowner or lighter professional use."

Steve Bachman, Germansville, Penn.: "My **Stihl** AK 12-in. chainsaw and blower are best buys. These homeowner-grade products are fantastic for general cleanup. You can't beat the ease of use. The batteries hold a decent charge. I still use gas-powered tools for all the big stuff, but these are my 'go-to' tools for small jobs."

Judah J. Streblov, Granite Falls, Minn.: "I'm pleased with my **Milwaukee** M12 Fuel Surge impact. It has surprising torque for an impact this size and can drive 4-in. screws with ease. The clip slides into your pocket smoothly and doesn't pull it down as much as an M18 impact does. I use this impact for electrical, pole barn screws, and regular exterior or interior screws."

"I'm also pleased with my **RovyVon** A5 flashlight (www.royvovon.com). It's the size of my pinky and puts out a maximum of 650 lumens. It only takes 1 hr. of charging with a USB-C to bring it back to full capacity. There's a magnet on the clip and a tail magnet. It also has a black light setting. The

Reid Alloway, Tourne-Sol Farm, Quebec: "The little multi-crop thresher from **Taian Mingyi Machinery Equipment Co.** has worked well for our farm's vegetable seed production. It has different screens, so we've used it to thresh small to medium lots of beans, peas, radishes and other crops we grow for seed. Before acquiring the machine, we threshed by hand in inefficient and time-consuming ways."

"Our machine has a 4 kW AC motor, a trailer-type frame, and 20-in. wheels. It's very easy to move around. To make it operational for our use, I fabricated a motor mount and belt guard and set up an electrical box with a magnetic starter, a circuit breaker and an emergency shut-off. Now it's completely safe for our operation."

"I consider it a best buy because it's hard to argue with the \$615 price tag in U.S. dollars. Freight and import fees brought the final number close to \$1,000, but that's still a very good price, considering the time and labor savings we've achieved with the machine in just 1 year."

battery lasts about 2 weeks.

"I haven't had a great experience with my small **Bucket Boss** pouch. It holds very little, not even enough for electrical work. The seam in one of the pockets also ripped right away. It's not the worst, but it certainly isn't a best buy."

Larry Glessner, Somerset, Penn.: "I have a **Deere** LX288 lawn and garden tractor that I bought new in 2000. It's only needed regular service and some belts. The fantastic thing is that it still has the original battery."

"I also have an **Ariens** 7-hp. rototiller that's 40 years old. It's only needed belts and a carburetor."

Bill Cochran, Aberdeen, Md.: "I bought a 2024 **Mitsubishi** Mirage a few months ago, and it's been a good vehicle. It gets 35 to 37 mpg around town because it's a 3-cyl. automatic. It's good for a 35 to 50-mile range and nice to drive around town. I wouldn't want to take it on a long trip, though."

S. Bruckner, Kiel, Wis.: "I purchased a new 2021 **Kubota** BX2380 with loader, mower deck, snowblower and cab. It's very well built, easy to operate and good on fuel. At 23 hp., it'll even run my standby generator with no problems."



Brian Longcore, Sand Lake, Mich.: "I bought an **Ohio Steel** 48-in. lawn sweeper from Tractor Supply (www.ohiosteel.com). It's supposed to pick up pinecones and twigs and does that well. The large hopper would get so full that it was difficult to pull the dump rope. So, I put a snowmobile starter handle on the rope, and now it's easy to empty the hopper. It also picks up pine needles and grass clippings."

Steve Korte, Glasgow, Mo.: "Last year, my wife found a local 1966 (the same year I was born) **Ford** 5000 69-hp. diesel tractor. We bought it for \$7,000. I've never seen a tractor start so easily, not even newer ones. It

had been well taken care of and runs great. I didn't even have to paint it. It only sips fuel. I replaced a brake seal on the axle. I need to replace a lift pump that's leaking a bit and the fuel petcock, which won't turn off. That's not bad for a 57-year-old tractor. It has an easy life pulling my 7-ft. Titan land planer and working up my 100-ft. by 150-ft. garden. I love it."

Steve isn't a fan of any new dishwashers or washing machines. "I went through three washing machines, none lasting longer than 2 to 5 years. So, Shelly and I went back in time and found a 1980s **Maytag** washer with a new timer installed. It's very heavy but well-built. We've used it for 10 years with no problems."

"I bought a new **Maytag** dishwasher, which leaked in the first year. It was fixed under warranty, but the control panel stopped working two years later. We got rid of it and bought the cheapest **Kenmore** (\$199) with a mechanical timer. Eight years later, it's still working like new."

Bruce Bishop, Saranac, Mich.: "I purchased a new 1986 Ford 1210 compact diesel tractor and used it for mowing and snow removal. I've only had to replace the mower drive belt after 32 years. I sold it to my neighbor, and he's still mowing with it weekly."

Benjamin Brenneman, Morley, Mich.: "We're very pleased with **Schaeffer's** oil as an engine oil (www.schaefferoil.com; ph 800-325-9962). Our Schaeffer's sales rep provided us with a fuel additive. Running their oil in diesels along with the additive helped us save 10 percent in fuel, adding up fast with today's prices. Keeping the air filter clean helps a lot, too."

On the negative side are Pittsburgh ratcheting wrenches from **Harbor Freight**. "They're junk before they come out of the store."

Ben Schlie, Janesville, Minn.: "Although heavy, my old **Craftsman** Sabre saw is the best saw I've owned."

"I bought my 2012 **Chevrolet** Colorado LT used with 130,000 miles on it. It now has 151,000 miles and gets 24 mpg. It doesn't have any rust. It's a great truck."

Raymond Swenson, Brooks, Minn.: "I needed a vehicle that's easy to get in and out of. Sedans are too low, and pickups are too high. My used 2021 **Subaru** Forester Touring

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