

Continued from previous page

SUV is just right. I'm impressed with the gas mileage for an all-wheel drive at 33 to 39 mpg. It also has impressive safety features."

Raymond isn't happy with tools and other items made in China. "Many of these items are 'junk quality' spin-offs of quality U.S.-made items. Some are stolen designs with likely illegal features, such as cutters that are dull and don't cut, wrenches that are soft material and bend, or 'round off' drill bits."

Randy Bunch, Alvaton, Ky.: "We have three **Kubota** tractors (M5-11, M8560 and M125X). They just run and run. We also have two side-by-sides. Kubota equipment is the best we've ever purchased."



Joe Meyer, Concord, Calif.: "My **Magna-Matic** blade balancer (model MAG-1000) allows me to perfectly balance my lawn mower blade, eliminating vibrations and wear on the mower (www.magna-matic-direct.com; ph 800-328-1110). Much better than using a nail to balance the blade after sharpening."

Bill Bitter, Wall, N.J.: "In 36 years, my 1988 **Yamaha** Warrior (rear-wheel drive) has only needed batteries and starter brushes. It's been used and abused but still runs great."

"My 2016 **Kobalt** line trimmer is still running on the original battery. It runs a long time on a charge and works great. Adding new trimmer line is a bit difficult, though."



Steven Malcomb, Worthville, Ky.: "I like my Bauer 2000 psi electric pressure from **Harbor Freight**. It runs smoothly, and the soap applicator works well. It's cheaper than going to a car wash."

"Engineered fuel for small engines seems expensive, but for weed eaters, gas hedge trimmers and similar tools that are only used occasionally, this fuel helps avoid repairs and lessens aggravation. I don't have gummed-up carburetors anymore."

Steven isn't satisfied with his **CountyLine** 15 gal. ATV spot sprayer from Tractor Supply. "The drain was very crudely formed. I should've taken it back for that alone, but I wanted to spray at the moment, not later. So, I repaired that so I could fill the tank. It worked great with water, but then I mixed it with glyphosate. It only sprayed 5 gal. and then wouldn't prime no matter what I did. It's worse than useless."

Wagner Farms, Kensington, Kan.: "My 2016 **Hustler** Super Z diesel-powered mower is the best money can buy. If you can stay in the seat, this machine can tackle any side hill. With 300 hrs. on it, I haven't spent a dime

except for filters. Power is awesome. It has a rear discharge, so there are no windrows in tall grass. It's a beautiful machine."

Samuel L. Troyer, Colon, Mich.: Samuel's worst buy is a **Ruger** Airhawk .177 caliber pellet gun. "It's a break action. The very first pellet got stuck halfway out of the barrel. I cleaned and greased it, but seven out of 10 shots still get stuck. I know of three other people with the same problem. It was money completely wasted. I bought a **Crossman** 10 pump, which has been a very good gun. It just takes longer to reload, which I was trying to avoid."

Dennis Lafrinere, Cheboygan, Mich.: "My **Stihl** MS 250 chainsaw is supposed to have an 18-in. bar, but measures 16 in. It won't start when needed and kicks back when it does start. I've replaced four recoil ropes while cutting up my firewood."

Scott Schnettler, Fond du Lac, Wis.: "My 2024 **Milwaukee** M12 3/8-in. right-angle impact wrench works well for changing lawn mower blades. It's good for tight places where you can't get a regular impact gun."

Scott has had a less-than-satisfactory experience with his 2022 **Milwaukee** USB rechargeable 700L flashlight. "It worked great the first year, but the battery wore down fast. I looked into buying another battery, but it wasn't a good price."

Laray Martin, Platteville, Wis.: "My 2022 **BigDog** Stout 54-in. zero-turn mower with Kohler engine has been a really good product (www.bigdogmowerco.com; ph 844-594-2448). I'm blessed with good dealer support. There was one small warranty detail that was taken care of quickly."

Skechers sneakers are on the worst-buy side. "They might have some good products, but I haven't found them. It doesn't take long to wear a pair out. From here on, it's only **Under Armour** sneakers for me. They're pricey, but they last."

Doug Comden, Brethren, Mich.: Doug has mixed feelings about his **Snap-On** tools. "It's a sad day when one has to say 'made in the USA' doesn't mean much anymore."

"Ninety percent of my tools are Snap-On; I've purchased them for over 40 years. I have no complaints about their durability, as they're the best in that aspect."

"My complaint (that falls on deaf ears) is that the size and labeling are substandard on new tools compared to my 30+ year old tools. The size rubbed off on my newly purchased Torx hand drivers after a couple of uses. The sizes on my 3/8-in. drive deep well metric sockets are so faint I can hardly read them. I noticed foreign-made tools are capitalizing on this as the sizes I can read from 3 to 4 ft. away, and the quality over the years has vastly improved. There once was a day when you could tell sizes just by looking at the tool, but now, with the mixture of metric and U.S. (that's another issue) and older eyes, it would be nice if larger, better-imprinted sizes were on the tools."

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Steve Berens, Oconomowoc, Wis.: "I use my 2020 **Milwaukee** 18-volt chainsaw for keeping logging roads open on my 182-acre hunting farm. It's quiet, has plenty of power, lasts a long time on a charge, and is easy to use."

"I also have a **Deere** 4610 on my farm. It starts every time, is easy to drive with the

Ergonomic Garden Tool Best Buy

Jim Ruen, La Crescent, Minn.: "When **FARM SHOW** asked me to try the **EarthLifter** tool, I readily agreed. I liked the potato fork look but questioned the value of the rolling fulcrum backside. Boy, was I wrong."

"Yes, the wide, flat tines look like the old potato fork I use for everything from digging out weeds to loosening garden beds and harvesting potatoes once a year. However, little differences in design add up. The tines have a slight curve that makes it easy to slip just under the ground surface when digging shallow-rooted weeds and grasses. At the same time, the very gentle curves don't interfere when going deep after dandelion and cocklebur-type roots."

"I like the diamond plate, non-slip foot pads. I can't believe the difference between them and my old flat steel fork. They're heavy-duty pads that aren't going anywhere, unlike the foot pads on a spade I bought a few years ago. They bent and broke off after minimal use."

"It's the rolling fulcrum that really impressed me. I tend to be a bit cynical about back-friendly or other ergonomic designs. At 73, I have my share of arthritis in my shoulders and knees. Most such devices don't impress me...or my arthritis. That wasn't the case with the **EarthLifter** Tool. Arthritis or not, the thing really works."

"I put it to the test on two of my biggest challenges, digging out deep-rooted grasses and clearing shallow and deep-rooted weeds out of our gravel driveway. It passed with flying colors."

"If my back and shoulders could talk, they



EarthLifter uses a rolling fulcrum for leverage to take the heavy work out of digging plants and roots.

would've been cheering how much easier the work was in both cases. Push it into the desired depth and rock it back on the rolling fulcrum. The extreme leverage made the heavy sod roots pop out of the ground. The curved feature also made it easier to slide the curved tines in at a slight angle when loosening up shallow-rooted weeds in gravel.

"At \$165, I thought the **EarthLifter** Tool a bit pricy. After using it, I think it's worth every penny. A quick scan of potato forks online displayed prices from \$40 to more than \$300. Not sure if the latter was gold plated, but I do know it didn't have the features of the **EarthLifter** Tool."

hydrostatic drive, and the loader is powerful and works well. After a leaky seal on the front axle, it's been problem-free."

Steve was disappointed in his **Betsco** Farmer-Helper 8-ft. backhoe. "After the first use, the boom and dipper rams leaked from faulty welds on the hose connection block. They argued about it but did send new rams, and the leak was solved. The hook bracket to support the boom for transit bent and broke on the first trip. I've welded it several times and made a heavier version myself. The original one was underdesigned. I guess I expected problems from a Chinese build. It still works, though."

Wilson Burkholder, Dayton, Va.: "My **White** tractors and combine are all great purchases. They're simple and reliable, and there's a low cost of ownership and operation. My 1985 **White** 8920 combine is nicely designed with simple, convenient controls."



Lamar Horning, East Earl, Penn.: "I'm a delighted user of a **Dek Spray Master** battery-powered backpack-style sprayer I bought from Cardinal Hollo Repair. It's lightweight, has good pressure, and completely empties the tank. It runs on power tool batteries."

Glenn Etters, Kings Mountain, N.C.: "I purchased my **Ford** F-150 Lariat SuperCrew new in 2003. It's a good truck, but the check engine light started coming on a few years ago. The garage could reset it, but it would come back on a week later."

Greg Good, Sugar Grove, Va.: "I bought my **Deere** 4005 in 2010, and it's worked hard with no problems."

"My **Bad Boy** wood splitter works every year without any problems."

"I use my **Stihl** Farm Boss chainsaw in summer and winter, and the only thing I've had to do is replace the chains when they wear out."

Fred Ebert, Billings, Mo.: "I read up on hybrid cars and decided they were worth a look. I traded a 2022 high-end, well-known car with all the safety equipment. The 2024 **Hyundai** Tucson Hybrid Blue I purchased is the base model. The only option was a \$300 'upgrade' to white paint. The safety equipment, engine size, comfort, etc., are much better than what I had. The car has prevented an accident at least three times. I'm very pleased."

Bruce Madden, Castleberry, Ala.: "My wife bought me a **DeWalt** battery-operated impact. It was one of their smaller impacts with a 20-volt battery. I was initially doubting it, but for its size, it's one of my best tools. It took off nuts on wheels that had been sitting for over 25 years. It snatched them off without any help from WD-40."

Michael Wood, Bitely, Mich.: "I have 595 acres and work on it daily. **FARM SHOW Magazine** gives me worthwhile ideas or good reading almost daily. I keep all copies to refer back to."

Edward Dittmer, Liberty, Ill.: "Our **IH** 1206, 756, and 1486 tractors are a pleasure to use."

Kent Biddick, Montfort, Wis.: "In 2023, I purchased a **Hart** HGCS02 20-volt 12-in. chainsaw (www.harttools.com; ph 800-776-5191). It turned out to be a great buy. The battery life is good. I love it and would get another one."

Daniel Carter, Caneyville, Ky.: "I bought a battery-operated angle grinder, a drill and an impact from **Harbor Freight** about 8 years