

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

ago. They still work great, and the batteries are still good. I would recommend these Bauer tools to anyone.”

Kenneth Harrison, Schellsburg, Penn.: “My 2022 **Kubota** RTV 1100 is a nice, well-built machine. I use it to haul all my firewood. With the rack I built for the bed, I can haul out a cord of wood every three and a half loads. It’s like having a mini pickup truck. It’s very handy for hauling and moving things on the property.”

Bobby Spivey, Cruger, Miss.: Bobby is the satisfied owner of a 2023 X-380 54-in. **Deere** mower. “It has plenty of power for tall grass. I mow about 2 acres weekly. All I do is sharpen the blades and change the oil and filter.”

Geri Draves, Halbur, Iowa: Geri is a fan of **Milwaukee** tools, especially the Top-Off and battery-operated shop vacuum. “My shop vac is light and very handy for vehicles. The Top-Off goes everywhere with us. I use it to charge phones and use my curling iron when no electric outlet is available.”

M. Todd, Bellevue, Ohio: “My **EGO** string trimmer is great at knocking down weeds. With its automatic push button string reloader, winding string by hand is a thing of the past.”

Robert Wright, Stockport, Ohio: “I mounted a 2021 2-gal. zero-pump garden sprayer from **Rural King** on a 2-wheel golf cart. Now, all I have to do is fill and spray. It’ll pump eight to 10 tanks on a single charge.”

John Hohmann, Pataskala, Ohio: “In 2022, I bought a **Stihl** MSA 140 C, AK-30 rechargeable battery, and charger as a package from a local dealer. This lightweight electric saw with a thin chain is excellent for pruning jobs and even cuts 8-in. to 10-in. logs into manageable sizes. The battery provides power for multiple cuts and quickly recharges. The saw is handy when a person needs to climb to cut. Safety is enhanced as all chain motion stops when the switch is released.”

Japanese 4-WD compact tractors that were American-branded are among John’s worst buys. “These were popular as versatile and reliable machines 30 to 40 years ago. The lack of available parts plagues them as we parts them out of use. Many of the original manufacturers merge or go out of business. Common parts like bearings seem unique to the manufacturer and aren’t available through usual parts sources.”

Lyle M. Lewis, Rosendale, Mo.: “My best buy is my 2000 **Dodge** pickup. It has over 200,000 miles and still runs great with no oil consumption.

“I like using my **Stihl** weed eater with plastic blades to mow fence rows. I wouldn’t use any other.”

Vaughn Derosier, Clayton, Wis.: “I’ve never been a fan of **DeWalt** cordless tools, but my father-in-law was kind enough to give me a DeWalt grease gun. He didn’t have a battery for it, so I decided I might as well purchase a tool with the battery kit. I settled on a 20-volt Atomic brushless drill/driver kit. Sometimes, the drill doesn’t run in the desired direction, and it’s annoying when changing bits. I’ll stick with my **Milwaukee** tools.”

John Bakker, Tyler, Minn.: “I have a 12-ft. **Pro-Tech** center pivot Sno Pusher (www.snopusher.com; ph 888-935-7278). Farmyards are not smooth, but this pusher can center pivot from side to side to follow the ground contour. It’s heavily built and made to last. My Sno Pusher works wonderfully on a Case 621 F wheel loader.”

John has been dissatisfied with lead-acid batteries. “It seems like replacement lead-acid batteries have a much shorter life span than the originals in a new piece of equipment. Maybe we’ve just had a bad spell

of luck. The brand doesn’t seem to matter as we’ve tried several with similar shorter lifetime performance.”

Jesse Barley, Tyrone, Penn.: “At the end of 2023, we purchased a new **Can-Am** Defender XT. It’s worked flawlessly. We pull hay wagons with it, pick up bales that missed the wagon, bring in horses from the pasture, haul tools to work locations, check riding trails and bring firewood in. Before getting the Defender, we used either a lawn tractor or a 4-wheeler with a trailer.

“I’m unhappy with my **EGO** electric chainsaw because the battery only lasts around 30 min.”

Ray Stephan, Peosta, Iowa: “My best buy is an 18-volt **Hitachi** battery-operated impact driver. It came with two batteries. I bought it in 2013 to help install a steel roof on a firehouse. It worked great with plenty of power to install screws. The battery lasts a long time, and I’m still using the original batteries. I use it almost daily as it’s my ‘go-to’ tool. I wouldn’t be without it.

“One of my most frustrating buys is my 2016 **Deere** X590 mower with 54-in. deck. The mower is great and does a good job. But the deck is a nightmare to remove and install. I had an X540 before this, and it had a lever to loosen the belt. Now, I need a 3/8-in. ratchet to loosen tension and hope it doesn’t slip and take my finger off. Also, the rear hangers are a bear to line up and get pins to go in. I dread removing the deck to clean or replace parts.”

Bryan Bitgood, Indian Orchard, Mass.: “**Ryobi** products are always a best buy. One standout is the power inflator. It lasts long enough to inflate four car tires and my wheelbarrow tire. My lawn mower can take on my somewhat ‘feral’ backyard. The battery recharges within 2 hrs., which is the perfect time for a break.”

Bryan is disappointed with his 2022 **Milwaukee** cordless drill. “The drill itself is great, but the battery holds a charge for, at best, half an hour and takes at least an hour to charge fully.”



Kent Strodtman, Independence, Mo.: “My hydraulic unlock tool from **Boling Machine Shop** is a major problem solver (www.bolingmachine.com; ph 660-699-3717). I first saw this in FARM SHOW. This tool is fantastic. It works flawlessly. I have recommended it to many people, and everyone loves it. Anyone with a skid steer needs this tool.”

Keith Osier, Ticonderoga, N.Y.: “My **Bauer** drills, chainsaw, hand grinder and weed trimmer are my ‘go-to’ tools. The batteries are long-lasting. They’ve been left out in the rain and dropped, and they still keep working.”

Jason Murphy, West Alexander, Penn.: “Battery-powered string trimmers are convenient. I mostly use **DeWalt** power tools, so adding their 20V Max 14-in. trimmer made sense. My first one lasted a little over a year before the motor burned out. I bought a second one, and it didn’t even last that long under light use around the house. I won’t buy another.”

Glenn Allen, Mt. Vernon, Ohio: “My 2015 **Fendt** 724 tractor with Profi loader is well made and runs efficiently. The biggest plus is the dealer support and knowledgeable service department.”



Parks likes the lifetime warranty and sharpening available from Cutco on its scissors and knives.

Best Buy Scissors And Knives

Ben Parks, Austin, Texas: “I bought a pair of **Cutco** scissors and knives in 2010, and I’ve been really impressed with them and the company (www.cutco.com; ph 800-828-0448). They’re American-made with a lifetime warranty, and the quality is excellent.

“I use the scissors more than the knives, cutting everything from paper and cardboard to plastic packaging. I’ve even cut light sheets of steel, aluminum, and small wires. With all that, they’re still perfectly sharp. They’re one of my main kitchen tools.

“If they need to be sharpened, they can

be sent back to the company at no cost beyond shipping. If something breaks, like the tip of a knife or scissors, send it in for a free replacement. These are true lifetime heirloom products.

“Another best buy is **NextLeap Skin Care** gel (www.nextleapskincare.com). I recently had a bout of fever blisters, and after applying it to the sores, they dried up in 3 days. It costs \$25 for a tube, but it works great. I purchased it on Amazon, and it was well worth the price.”

Glenn’s 2020 **JCB** 270T skid loader started as a best buy, but problems with the A/C have turned it into a worst buy. “The dealer has sent four temp sensors for the A/C unit, but the A/C only keeps the cab cool on cloudy days. If the temp isn’t in the 90s, it blows warm air. The third sensor lasted less than a month, and it cost me \$900 for the fourth one because the guy didn’t bring the sensor and had to make two trips. Also, the bucket latch didn’t hold, and the bucket fell off, broke the windshield, and damaged the front of the cab.”

Robert Hershey, Perryville, Mo.: “At 81, I wasn’t ready to give up cutting my firewood. My **EGO** 18-in. battery-operated chainsaw starts without pulling a starter rope. It’s quiet and cuts as well as my old gas saw. When you’re stumbling around in a treetop, you don’t have a running saw in your hands. I’ll never go back to gas power.”

Leonard Mallas, Fond du Lac, Wis.: “I have a new **DeWalt** 20-in., 60-volt chainsaw that has the same weight and feel as a comparable gas saw and cuts like a beaver when the chain is sharp. My complaint is that the run time is very short. After a half dozen cuts on a log, it dies. The batteries are costly; even with two, they can’t charge as fast as they consume. We use all DeWalt tools, and this is my only complaint.”

Carmen Renfrew, Oxford, Conn.: “My best buy is the Pittsburgh 3/8-in. drive ratchet set from **Harbor Freight**. The case is well-designed and organized. I’ve used the sockets in my 1/4-in. impact and none have broken. The switch on the ratchet is easy to move and has a lock to keep the socket from coming out. I’m impressed that none of the ratchet teeth have broken.”

Charlie Derrenbacher, Williamson, N.Y.: “I mow about 4 acres with my **Kubota** F2690 with 72-in. mowing deck. It reduces my time mowing. I bought five other Kubotas over the past 20 years and have had no problems.”

Ron Pulkrabek, Glencoe, Minn.: “**Kumho** tires are the worst tires I’ve ever had in 70 years of driving and hundreds of tires I used on my farm. My new Hyundai

came with **Kumho** tires. I’m a careful driver living in a small town (pop. 5,600). The tire tread let loose at 25,000, 26,000 and 30,400 miles. Warranty was 60,000 miles. Via Priority Mail, I sent all the requested information: tire number, photos, tread depth, etc. Per postal tracking, it was signed for on their end, but in numerous emails, they said they didn’t receive it. I contacted Hyundai at Consumer Affairs, notifying them they had a problem with the tires they’re putting on their cars. They said it was between Kumho and me. I was asking for \$600. After 6 mos. and 10 emails, I gave up.”

Mike Feyereisen, Hammond, Wis.: Mike’s the proud owner of a **Deere** 1025R sub-compact tractor. “I use this tractor for tilling gardens, putting in food plots and planting corn and beans with a one-row planter that attaches to the 3-pt. I also use it for light loader work, brush mowing and running a wood chipper. I only have 55 hrs. on it so far, but it’s had no problems yet.”

Allen Pederson, Nashua, Iowa: Allen likes his **Milwaukee** utility knife and 18-volt vacuum and compressor. “The utility knife has a place to store an extra blade, flip-out Phillips and flat screwdrivers, a 1/4-in. drive and more. It’s always by my side. The 18-volt compressor and portable wet/dry vac are major time savers. Both are better than I imagined.”

Jeff Hootman, Jeromesville, Ohio: “My best buy is the **Bell + Howell** Bionic Spotlight (www.bell-howell.com; ph 212-689-9094). I bought a single and was so pleased that I bought another single, two doubles, and a triple light. They’re solar-powered, motion-activated, and sensitive enough that my cats can set them off. They’re excellent as a pathway light but not so much as a work light as they turn off 30 seconds after the last motion detected.”

Mike Jorgenson, Clinton, Minn.: Mike is pleased with his 2016 **Cobett** geothermal cattle waterer (www.cobett.com; ph 888-699-4722). “I saw this waterer in FARM SHOW. It’s great for northern climates and works well with various herd sizes.”