

of bales without any issues. I've only done regular maintenance like overhauling the plunger and knottor and replacing regular wear items. I'd purchase another one in a heartbeat. I highly recommend."

Dennis Hurley, Boonville, Ind.: Dennis is the satisfied owner of an **Earthquake** rear-tine tiller (Model 39381) with counter-rotating tines and a 209cc Viper engine. "In May 2023, I needed a new tiller and Googled which was a good one. It showed the Earthquake brand. I'd never heard of it but ordered one through Tractor Supply. Assembly was easy. I've gardened for over 50 years and can say this tiller is a pleasure to use. There's not much vibration and it does a great job of tilling the dirt. It gets a 10 from me."

Bob Myracle, Baxter, Tenn.: "The battery on my **Makita** electric trimmer lasts a long time. It's quiet and powerful. I like the tap-to-feed head feature.

"The chain speed on my **Worx** pole saw is too slow. It bounces when placed on a limb."

Don Bond, Kersey, Colo.: "Every **Bobcat** skid loader I've ever owned has been a best buy. They're the handiest, most reliable pieces of equipment on the entire farm. We use a skid loader every day. I hate to think about how we got things done before I bought the first one in 1998. Each one we've bought has been used, and not a lemon in the bunch."

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Lee DeVries, Crawfordville, Ore.: "In the last issue of FARM SHOW, I noticed some innovative and interesting ways to start a chainsaw with less effort. I've cut firewood a good share of my life and am now in my late 80's with arms not as strong as they used to be. Pulling the starter rope is not so easy anymore.

"My local saw shop solved my problem by recommending a **Stihl MS-211C** with the Easy-2-Start feature. Instead of pulling against compression, you're winding up a spring, and it turns the flywheel, even if you can only pull the rope a few inches at a time. Works well, and the saw has lots of power. It's easy to adjust chain tension.

"I also recommend **Frawley's Saw Shop**. High-quality chains at decent prices. Give them the make and model, and they'll give you the right chain every time (www.frawleyssawshop.com; ph 563-544-4498)."

Clifton Hannah, Dwight, Neb.: "My best buy is a set of 430 **Channel Lock** pliers that I bought when I was 10 years old. They followed me through 10 years on the farm and lived in my tool belt for 39 years at the Kawasaki manufacturing plant. Unlike me, they are only semi-retired."

Galen Martin, Manheim, Penn.: "I like my battery-powered **DeWalt** leaf blower. I'm not a mechanic, so it's frustrating when those little 2-cycle engines don't run right. One other advantage is that when I'm using the blower there's always dust blowing around, but I don't need to worry about the air filter because there isn't any."

Dexter Brahn, Ionia, Iowa: Dexter's best buy is an HD36 **Norwood** sawmill he bought 2 years ago after owning a Norwood Mark 4 for 23 years. "The HD36 was delivered on three pallets, so I installed every bolt, cotter pin, etc., myself. I ordered it without the extra clamps and hydraulics. I made those myself

along with an 8-ft. extended track and extra bunks."



Ron Epperson, Montgomery Creek, Calif.: "My best buy is a **Pound Of Rain** sprinkler that I've owned for 20 years. It's made from cast iron and is 4 3/8-in. dia. This sprinkler is indestructible with a heavy coat of yellow paint. It won't plug up and puts out an even mist of water up to about 30 ft. dia. In tall grass, you can nail it to a short board to keep it straight. You can find old ones on eBay, but they're also still made new by LR Nelson (www.lrnelson.com), and you can find them at Walmart and other retailers."

Greg Garon, Timber Lake, S.D.: "My **Ford 8N** was a best buy despite a couple of limitations. It didn't have live power and was only a 5-speed transmission, so stopping power and speed were limited. I sold it to purchase a **Deere 2010** tractor with live power. With live power, the mower can be engaged or disengaged safely with little effort. My wife and 11-year-old granddaughter can now mow our driveway and road ditches with a brush hog mower easily and safely. Another feature is the Deere has eight forward speeds and three reverse. Plus, my granddaughter says, 'It's a cool looking John Deere.'

"On a recommendation from a relative, I purchased a new **Husqvarna** chainsaw. Hands down, it became my worst purchase ever. On the first tank of gas, the piston tore up the motor, and we couldn't find parts. The dealer told us that because it was a closeout, he couldn't honor the warranty, and a boat anchor was created. When I called, the company wouldn't even listen to my problem. Thank goodness I have several newer and old **Stihl** chainsaws to save the day."

Michael Kellett, Sublette, Kan.: "My 2022 60-in. **Bad Boy** Avenger riding lawnmower starts easily and has a comfortable seat. The deck and frame are well-built. It has zerks on lube points, and maintenance is easy."

Michael isn't pleased with his **NAPA** Deep Cycle marine battery. "It actually has fewer cycles and fewer CCA than a regular car battery but costs 50 percent more."

Leonard Seltzer, Manhattan, Ill.: "I bought a new **Deere Z335E** mower in the spring of 2020. It ran well the first year but then had engine trouble. Long story short, it's been through three carbs and several other parts through the dealer and a friend of mine. The engine looks like a Briggs & Stratton, but Deere changes them so that the parts are theirs.

"It's never idled right, even after nearly \$1,000 in repairs. When Deere came out with the new model, it looked like they changed the carb. Although I like the mower, Deere definitely had a problem. Shame on a company of its size for not taking care of this. I would be interested to hear if anyone else has had these problems."

Jerome Webb, Harrold, S.D.: "Hands down, **Milwaukee** cordless tools are best buys on our farm. I've used them for 5 years and haven't had one fail yet, even with daily usage. If Milwaukee makes it, we own it. I can't imagine going without any of them. Angle grinders, impact wrenches, saws, leaf blowers, sprayers – they're all great.



Shaw uses his Fordson Dexta and appreciates its fuel economy and durability.

English Tractor Finds Home On Ohio Farm

A chance encounter with a 32-hp. blue 1958 **Fordson Dexta** tractor at a local dealership led to a \$1,200 purchase for Aaron Shaw.

The tractor caught Aaron's eye because he remembered a story his father told him years ago about a neighbor's English-built Dexta that experienced starter failure and was left running for days on end. The story went that after 12 hrs. of idling, the diesel level could still be reached with a finger from the fuel cap opening.

After purchasing the tractor, he replaced the failing fenders, changed the fluids, replaced the brake axle shaft seals with parts he could find only in Canada, replaced the pto seal, plus installed a muffler in place of the straight pipe it came with.

"For some unknown reason, the seat was set tight and broken at a 180-degree angle, facing the wrong direction," Shaw says. "I had to get a new seat and mount it properly before we could use it."

The previous owner had set the front wheels as far apart as possible, so Shaw

moved them inward for functionality and easier turning. This turned out to be difficult as he needed an acetylene torch to loosen the completely frozen up front end.

After 3 years of owning the Dexta, it's run sickle bars, hay tedders, rakes, and seed drills and pulled loaded hay wagons with ease.

Its legendary fuel economy has also proved to be true.

"Just yesterday, I filled the tank, did all my 3rd cut hay raking, plus my neighbor used it for something at his farm, and it's only down 1/4 of a tank," Shaw says.

The 65-year-old Dexta has become a favorite of everyone on the farm.

"My wife loves it, and it brings out the inner child in me," Shaw says. "It's never said 'no' to any job. Just tells me it's working fine with a puff of smoke, and off it goes."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Aaron Shaw, Thornville, Ohio 43076 (ph 740-215-8904; aaronshaw09@gmail.com).

"Since 2012, I've used propane fuel conversions on six of our farm trucks. The LPG conversion I favor is Prins by **Westport Fuel Systems**. I've used the Prins LPG conversion for 5 years with no issues. I started with **ICOM** conversions. There are several reasons why I stopped using them. The ICOM needs a special fuel tank, which costs significantly more than a standard automotive LPG tank. I was also having issues with the fuel gauge and control system in the cab. It was cheaply made or not durable. The availability of service was minimal at best."

David Krapf, New Vienna, Iowa: David has mixed feelings about his **H&S** 6-basket hay tedder. "It works great. A gear case from the factory failed, but the dealer took care of it. The downside of it is the number of grease zerks. Each knuckle has an impossible-to-get-at zerk. It takes two people to grease it; one to operate the grease gun and one to turn the rotor just right."

Leo Tavernetti, Atascadero, Calif.: "My **Oregon 30-ton** log splitter works great after I fixed the slide rails so they don't plug up. I also put an adjustable jack stand on the front.

"My **DeWalt** battery-operated chainsaw and skill saw are good machines."

Doug, Ind.: "I like my 2021 **Deere 1025** 4-WD tractor with cab and loader. It starts on the coldest days and runs great. I use it for odd jobs. It plows snow without added weight. It's also good on fuel. It's a very handy compact.

"My 2017 **Polaris** Ranger 570 is an excellent machine. I've only had to replace the battery.

"I regret buying a 2021 **Thor** motorhome. Things were falling apart before I got it home. The 3-mode refrigerator would only run on one mode. The bathroom door fell off, the water heater leaked, and the valances fell off. The Chinese battery is junk. The cabinets and drawers were loose. The only good thing is the Ford diesel drivetrain."

Wayne E. Smith, Amboy, Ill.: "I'm pleased with the **Bauer** tools I've bought from Harbor Freight over the past 2 years. I started with a 20-volt string trimmer and grew from there. The trimmer was a huge improvement over the gas one I had because I was half worn out by the time the gas one was running. It didn't take long until I bought a 10-in. 20-volt chainsaw and I love it. My most recent purchase is a 20-volt pole saw, which I also like.

"I'm also very pleased with the **Honda** CRV that I bought new in 2020. It gets 33 to 36 mpg. My 2000 CRV lasted 20 years for me, and now my son is using it.

"My worst buy in recent memory was two refurbished **Ryobi** 16-in. chainsaws. They looked new and started nicely but neither one would cut through anything over 4 in. thick. Both had guide bars that were not straight and true, so they could only help to take off

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