

Best & Worst Buys

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promoting uniform depth and spacing. Fits Deere, Kinze, White, Yetter, Case-IH, and Monosem planters and most no-till and conventional drills.

"I used the drill to no-till double-crop soybeans after peas and got a fine, uniform stand. I also used it to no-till winter wheat after snap beans, with equally good results. It's really fun to dig for wheat seed behind a drill and find the seed where it's supposed to be. Looking at a picture-perfect no-till wheat stand is surely one of the great pleasures of farming. When I compare my drill's performance to other ones of the same make in my area, it's evident that the Rebounders have raised my drill to a new level of efficiency."

Joe Abba, Acampo, Calif.: Joe's "best buy" is his 1989 **Dodge LE 250** 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine. "I bought it used and all I've ever had to do is put in fuel and drive. I wouldn't hesitate to buy another one."

Larry A. Bauman, Connell, Wash.: Larry likes his 1995 **Deere 7400** tractor and 1997 **Deere 7810** MFWD tractor. "Both tractors have convenient controls and good engines and 3-pt. hitch controls."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1995 **Ford F-150** 2-WD pickup equipped with a 300 cu. in. 6-cyl. engine and 5-speed transmission. "We've owned many Ford pickups over the years and liked them. The problem with this one is that it has a new-design clutch slave cylinder - we've had to replace it twice in only 40,000 miles. Now it's not working again but the company won't do anything about it. They say the problem is due to our dusty conditions. It was a bad design change on a part that had worked well for many years."

Paul Williams, Fort Jones, Calif.: Paul nominates his 1996 **Honda** 4-wheeler "Foreman 400" ATV as his "best buy". "This machine's reliability is unquestionable. It always runs like a top no matter what the circumstances. I use it every day and think that with proper maintenance it'll last 10 to 15 years. We're still using two other Honda 'Big Red' 3-wheeler ATVs that are about 10 years old."

"My **Polaris** 'Trailboss 250' ATV is my worst buy. Replacement parts for it are too expensive, if they're available at all. The transmission 'free-wheels' when the machine is going downhill, and the machine is too tall. Our **Honda Foreman 400** has two or three times as many miles as the **Polaris** with absolutely no problems."

Ben Barton, Mart, Texas: "My best buy is my 1996 **Deere Gator 4** by 2 equipped with a gas engine. This is an absolutely amazing, very efficient and, so far, completely dependable piece of equipment. My wife and I have a small cattle operation in the Blacklands of Texas, and during the rainy season the **Gator** will float over the black, sticky mud without making deep ruts. I use the **Gator** for all cattle management tasks including daily inspection, feeding, roundup, and fence repair. I don't even own a horse. My wife loves it for making her daily runs with her dogs. No problems."

Willard Donahey, Utica, Ohio: Willard's disappointed with his 1994 **Ford F-150** pickup. "I had problems with the computer sensor which caused the engine to idle

too fast. Also, the rear end is geared too high. Get rid of the computers and sensors and it would be a good truck. I finally ended up selling it. However, my old 1978 **Ford F-250** 4-WD pickup is still going strong at 165,000 miles.

"I like **Wheelhorse** lawn equipment."

Joe C. Drake, Encampment, Wyo.:

"Get rid of the computers and sensors and this would be a good truck."

"I'm impressed with my 1994 **Ford F-250** heavy duty pickup equipped with a 460 cu. in. engine. A rear wheel seal went out when it was still under warranty, but the dealer replaced both rear seals and installed new brake linings at no cost. That's been the only repair after 80,000 miles, a great deal of which were spent pulling trailers.

"My **Harbor Freight** small bench drill press is my worst buy. It's underpowered and came apart. First the belt guard broke, then the gauge broke and a bolt stripped in the table."

Levi Adams, Locke, N.Y.: "I've owned many chain saws over the years, but for the money none were as peppy or powerful as this one," says Levi about his 1997 **Husky 257** chain saw. "It's lightweight, dependable, starts easily, and has a user-friendly blade brake. All controls are within easy reach. It cost less than a comparable **Stihl** model, but I feel that it's built with equal quality."

Gary Kuechenmeister, Melvin, Mich.: Gary likes his **Miller Millermatic 130** welder, a 115-volt, wire feed demonstration model that he bought in 1995. "It's a top brand name that weighs a hefty 73 lbs. and has a cast aluminum drive system rather than the plastic kind and a built-in gas solenoid valve. I bought this welder to do jobs between my arc welder and acetylene torch outfit. So far I've used it only with a flux cored wire so I can't weld thin sheet steel without burning through it. I plan to install a gas conversion kit and use solid wire and try this for welding thin sheet metal."

Lynn Krick, Hamburg, Penn.: Lynn's impressed with his 1995 3-pt. mounted **McHale** bale slicer made in Ireland (distributed by The Lely Corp., Box 1060, Wilson, N.C. 27894 ph 800 334-2763 or 919 291-7050). "I use it to slice wrapped round silage bales to feed in our stanchion barn. It works great for cutting the bale in half and then into quarters. We also use it to cut straw bales. The only thing that it won't cut easily is bean stalks. The slicer is simple to use since it just has a single cylinder that pushes a cutting edge through the bale."

"My worst buy is my 1990 **NuHawk 350** flail manure spreader. The first year the starter flails flew off. The dealer got us new ones but they lasted only a few months, too. The dealer then got hardened ones from the company. The next problem was that the drive shaft snapped. The dealer had to install a new rotor. The company told us they knew they had a bad batch of rotors in which the shafts could snap, but they thought they had gotten rid of them. I guess they were wrong."

Larry Dahlsad, Georgetown, Minn.: "My worst buy is my **Agco White 6700** planter. It doesn't space the seeds uniformly. They drop in gobs. No one at the dealer or the company knows why this planter doesn't work and no one will take the time to investigate."

Gregory L. Reif, Claflin, Kan.: Gregory builds custom iron corrals and pens for farmers, ranchers, veterinarians, etc, and says his **Miller Blue Star 2E** portable DC welder is his "best buy". "For three years during the fall and winter months I've used it 6 to 8 hours straight every day. It reminds me of a Timex watch - it just keeps on going. I'd buy another one."

"I also like my **Accu-Strike** welding helmet with chin-activated lens.

"My worst buy is my 1982 **Case 2290** tractor. "The transmission never shifted properly. The tractor went through two rear ends in 1,800 hours even though I never over-pulled the tractor. After spending almost \$11,000 on repairs I finally gave up on it. I replaced it with a **Case-IH 7130** Magnum which is 10 times the tractor in every way."

Chop Gibson, Scranton, Iowa: A 1994 **Agco Allis 9690** tractor with an air-cooled Deutz engine and 18-speed powershift transmission rates as Chop's "best buy". "It starts good, has a lot of power, and is built tough."

"My worst buy is my **White 273** 24-ft. disk. It does a good job and I like everything about it except for the gang bearings. The disk seems to eat one for lunch almost every day."

Martin Kramer, Algona, Iowa: "My best buys are my two **Cover-All 30** by 72-ft. hoop buildings which I use for finishing hogs."

"It seems to eat a bearing for lunch almost every day."

The first one was put up in the fall of 1995 and the second one in 1996. My two sons and I built both of them and found that they're easy to erect. They cost only about one third as much to build as a conventional hog confinement finishing building. It's a joy to raise hogs in them. They don't smell like a confinement building and there's no snow to scoop as with outdoor feeding floors."

John Berry, Abingdon, Va.: John likes his **Kencove Farm Fence** geared electric fence reel for temporary fencing. "The best feature is its 3:1 gear ratio. It lets me roll up fence really fast. The reel is well built and has a white plastic bobbin that's flexible so it doesn't break easily."

Dale Kelm, Faribault, Minn.: "I purchased my **Micro Trac M-T 3000** sprayer monitor in 1986 and it has always been accurate and reliable."

Lon Stretesky, Big Springs, Neb.: A 1996 **Dodge Ram 2500** 4-WD pickup equipped with a V-10 gas engine rates as Lon's "best buy". "It has a comfortable ride and I've had very few problems with it. The transmission had to be adjusted but the dealer took care of it right away. The V-10 engine has a lot of power. It gets 9 mpg when pulling a load and up to 14 mpg on the highway, which I don't think is too bad."

On the "worst buy" side he lists his 1996 **Sunflower** disk. "The person who set it up didn't grease the bearing in the walking beam axle for the carrier wheels. As a result, the bearing went out and ruined the walking beam and shaft. We were fortunate that our dealer fixed the problem at no cost."

John H. Valentine, Carlisle, Ma.: "My best buy is my **Westmore** silo blower which is propane powered by a 240 hp Chrysler industrial engine. It rechops silage twice. We've never had a plugged silo pipe since we started using it."

Ralph Decker, Delton, Mich.: "I've owned several **Deere** tractors over the years, but my 1995 7400 MFWD model is the best yet," says Ralph. "It has tremendous lugging power and the Power Quad transmission is excellent. It also has a great cab and controls. It's an excellent tractor."

"My 1995 **Dodge 3500** dually pickup equipped with a diesel engine has a lot of pulling power and is easy on fuel. The new-style **Dodge** pickups are comfortable to operate and a pleasure to drive."

James E. Whitehead, Bennett, Colo.: "My **Hesston 4800** big square baler does a great job and needs only routine maintenance. I haven't had to replace many parts on it. It's a good machine."

"My **Lightening B** bale monitor was a joke. It never worked right."

"The 454 cu. in. engine on my 1989 **Chevrolet** pickup overheated all the time and I couldn't get anyone to do anything about it. I can't use it to pull anything even when the temperature is only in the 70's or 80's."

Ammon Brenneman, Guthrie, Ky.: "It handles nice, starts good, and is maintenance-free," says Ammon about his **White 100** tractor.

Donald L. Bradbury, Cassville, N.Y.: Donald's "best buy" is his 1994 **Ford GT95** tractor. "I use a 48-in. mower deck with it to cut my 1 1/2 acre lawn and it does a good job. I also use a 42-in. snowblower with it which also does a good job. The snowblower has hydraulic controls and a hydrostatic transmission with high and low range."

Harry G. Walker, N. Brookfield, N.Y.: "It's a pleasure to drive and use," says Harry about his 1996 **Kawasaki 2510** Mule. "It has manual steering, hydraulic brakes, 2 or 4-wheel drive, a transmission with high and low range, and a locking differential. It has a lot of power, is stable on side hills, and can handle heavy loads. It steers well whether it's empty or loaded. No problems."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1993 **Mountain Lion 6-WD** ATV. "It's supposed to have power steering, but when you go down a steep, rough hill at slow speeds it doesn't work. Another problem was that when the vehicle is loaded it's almost impossible to make a left turn. It's easy to make a right turn because you can disengage the right drive clutch. The machine is very noisy and unpleasant to drive. It has three separate chain-driven clutches, and the chains are so tight that the bearings went out. The master links on the chains were welded on and I couldn't find replacement links anywhere except at the factory. One clutch broke and the company replaced it - there were no dealers in my area. The man who delivered the machine said that five years from now I'd be able to tell people that I had no trouble with the machine. However, I had trouble with it after only six months - and the machine was snowed in for four of those months."

Robert Ingram, McArthur, Calif.: "One of my best buys ever is my **DeWalt 945** 12-volt cordless drill. I've put a lot of hours on it. I purchased a second battery so that I can always keep it going. It's durable and definitely built for the long haul."

"My **Black & Decker** industrial 1/2-in. electric impact wrench is a best buy. It saves a tremendous amount of time and effort in repairing machinery."