

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

ers said they knew I had a problem but couldn't do anything about it. I'm very disgusted with the vehicle and also with the lack of help I've received from the company."

**Jim Hartman, Pemberville, Ohio:** "The worst buy I've experienced in a long time was my **DR Trimmer**. It was advertised as the best trimmer money could buy and was supposed to cut just about anything and everything. However, I found that it vibrated and was always out of balance and hard to control. I was told I could return it at my expense by shipping it back but I thought that was unfair because I paid \$711 for the machine. In the future I'll buy all my equipment from dealers."

**Roger Fridy, Slaughters, Ky.:** "My 1984 Volkswagen car equipped with a diesel engine is my best buy. It has about 225,000 miles on it and gets 47 mpg. It has been almost trouble-free except for normal maintenance. I replace the timing belt every 50,000 miles. It handles well in snow. A real gem."

**Roland Boedeker, Yoakum, Texas:** "Twenty years ago I bought a **Stihl** chain saw and it's still going strong. I've never really had any problems with it. The best thing is that it starts easy."

**Kris Rutko, Pitman, Penn.:** "My 2003 Ford F-350 pickup equipped with a Power Stroke diesel engine is my best buy. I really enjoy driving it because it has immense pulling power and a comfortable ride. My 2003 Pequea trailer is a perfect match for this pickup, and its extreme maneuverability helps in tight places. I use the trailer to haul a pair of wide front-end antique tractors."

**Gary Risler, Mondovi, Wis.:** "My **Hesston** hay tedder lifts and spreads hay perfectly. It really helps dry out hay after it gets rained on."

**Larry Davis, North Freedom, Wis.:** "Last summer we purchased a new **Deere** Gator 4 by 2 to save wear and tear on our tractors and our pickup. We use it for doing chores and fencing work and for on-farm transportation. It works well for all these jobs."

**Michael Trego, Glenmoore, Penn.:** "It does a great job of cutting heavy, damp, wet hay. We can even use it when it's raining," says Michael, pleased with his 1995 **New Holland** 1411 discbine.

**E. Claggett, Frazeyburg, Ohio:** "My **New Holland** 195 manure spreader spreads manure evenly and is my best buy.

"My **Bobcat** skid steer loader is my worst buy. It's equipped with advanced hand controls and we've had several electrical problems with them."

**Marshall Orcutt, Siloam Springs, Ark.:** "My 1985 **Kubota** 7950 tractor is a great tractor. Last year I had the fuel injection pump rebuilt and that's the only repair this tractor has ever needed.

"My 1997 **Shindawa** Weed Eater is a best buy. I use it hard but have never had any problems with it. It still runs like new."

**Arnold Rehbein, Lino Lakes, Minn.:** "Last April I ordered a building from **Cleary Buildings** of Verona, Wis. The company promised delivery in May, but changed specs after I put the money down. They finally ordered it from the factory in mid June. It started raining a lot here in early July. They finally put up the building in late December, after much fooling around. As of mid February I was still waiting for my warranty and the other papers I have coming."

**T.E. Kirk, Edgerton, Mo.:** "I bought a Tree Lounge deer stand and wanted to warn other FARM SHOW readers that I think it's unsafe. I nearly broke my leg using it and when I called the company for a refund, they refused, even though their ads claim a money-back guarantee.

"The problem is when you try to climb the



tree. You're supposed to stand on the lower part, raise the upper part, and then use your legs to pull up the lower part. In my opinion, this is a tricky, dangerous maneuver."

**Russ Weisensel, Sun Prairie, Wis.:** "As a paraplegic for 40 years, I've ridden and driven many different vehicles. I strongly disagree with Elmer Pinkerton in your last issue that minivans with a lowered floor for the handicapped are not a good buy. Yes, these vans have reduced ground clearance but the advantages are an automatic door and short ramp, for easy and quick entrance without any help.

"There are alternative vans with raised roofs for extra headroom without losing ground clearance. The problem with that is that you might need a hydraulic lift, rather than a ramp, and you might have to modify your garage door.

"For the most independence and best money spent, my vote goes to converted minivans."

**Keith Brown, West Branch, Iowa:** "My worst buy of a lifetime was an **Aerway** tillage tool. The manufacturer and dealer knew the frame had weak areas but I was not notified and there was no recall to correct the problem. The front 4-in. tube frame broke, leaving me in the field unable to lift or fold the machine. The tines were a problem, too. I apparently got a bad lot of brittle tines so the dry conditions last fall broke them off like icicles.

"Aerway offered to resolve these problems by selling me a new machine at dealer cost after I sell my old unit at auction. That was not acceptable.

"With the help of Motion Tools of Indianapolis, Ind., (ph 866 773-2730; www.genesistillage.com), I am modifying the configuration of this machine by installing modified Aerway-style tines and beefing up the frame. When we're done, it should work like the original design intended. When made right, these tools should not need four tons of concrete to make them penetrate the soil. I think aerating and loosening the soil in the fall ahead of no-till planting is a great concept."

**Allen Stultz, Afton, Va.:** "My all-time best buy is my 1965 **Sears** Suburban garden tractor equipped with a 12 hp Tecumseh gas engine and 6-speed transmission. I have all the implements made for it including a fairly rare sicklebar mower. We use this tractor every day for all kinds of work and it always does a great job. It excels at plowing heavy snow up our long, steep driveway. I haven't had to replace anything on it. The tractor still has the original drive belt and the engine always starts right up. I'd like to buy another identical model for backup purposes, so if anyone has one for sale please let me know."

**Ron Scharabok, Waverly, Tenn.:** "My two best buys let me run my cattle operation almost single-handedly: the **Hay Wrap** bale wrapping machine (Hay Wrap, Inc. ph 800 248-9727; www.haywrap.com) and **Hydra-Bed** (Triple C Mfg., ph 800 530-5624; www.triple-c-inc.com). The Hydra-Bed mounts on my flatbed truck and is equipped with hydraulic arms that allow me to load and haul round bales from the field to my storage area at highway speeds.



Matt and Mike Frey bought a used IH Axial Flow combine in 1982. Turns out, the machine they bought was the very first Axial Flow to come off the assembly line.

## First-Ever Axial Flow Still Running Strong

Buying used machinery can often lead to surprises, but those surprises aren't usually as pleasant as the one brothers Matt and Mike Frey, Pocahontas, Illinois received.

Their father Duane bought one of the first new IH Axial Flow combines in 1978. The Freys liked the 1460 rotary so much that Mike and Matt bought a used one of the same vintage from the same dealer in 1982. They had no idea how special that machine would turn out to be.

Both combines had four-wheel drive and were able to wade through mud and snow. After harvest in the fall of 2002, Duane's Axial Flow had more than 6,000 hours on it. The one Mike and Matt bought now has more than 4,000 hours.

That both combines have performed so well for 25 years with regular routine maintenance and only minimal repairs is enough

to qualify them as best buys. But that's not the surprise.

The surprise came when Mike and Matt were contacted in 1998 by a Case IH employee. Turns out, the used machine they bought was the very first Axial Flow to come off the assembly line. Case IH was putting together an article and video to commemorate the building of the 100,000th Axial Flow for a dealer's meeting and wanted to know if the first Axial Flow was still in use.

"We had no idea the combine had any historical significance," Matt says. "The 1460's are easy to maintain and it's simple to replace worn parts, so we've just kept them going."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Matthew Frey, 136 Locust Creek Rd., Pocahontas, Ill. 62275-3642 (ph 618 669-2361).

"Once I'm at the storage area I use the **Hay Wrap** to quickly wrap the bales in plastic. The wrapped bales keep almost all their quality even when stored outdoors, and as a result



my cattle will eat the bales from the sides and not just the ends. There's very little waste. I use the **Hydra-Bed** to hold the bales off the ground while I remove the plastic. I'd much rather haul bales to my cattle in the comfort of a truck than use a tractor, especially during cold weather. Both machines are well-built and have had almost no downtime. This equipment takes the place of a hired hand, and it never arrives at work with a hangover."

**Angel Peak Ranch, Bloomfield, N.M.:** "Our best buy **RAU** Electronic Animal Immobilizer works as well as the story in FARM SHOW said it would (I & G distributors USA, Atlanta, Ga. ph 770 350-0342; www.igdusa.com). Essentially, the Immobilizer temporarily paralyzes any size animal, using an electronic pulse that prevents muscle movement. The device makes it much safer and easier to hold animals motionless for branding, castrating, de-horning, hoof trimming, and other jobs.

"Whether we use it on cattle inside a chute or lying on the ground, every procedure has been completed without injury to the animal or to our cowboys, and in record time. We've used it on calves ranging from two weeks old to bulls weighing 2,500 lbs. without any prob-

lems. This product has more than paid for itself in labor savings and injury reductions in just one season. It's well-built and resistant to all the mishaps that can happen during cattle handling. I plan to use my Immobilizer any time we work on livestock. I carry it with me in the pickup at all times."

**John Price, Bloomville, Ohio:** John likes **Walls** insulated coveralls (ph 847-952-0480 or www.allseasonsuniforms.com). "I've worn them outside in cold and snowy conditions while unloading firewood, while driving a tractor without a cab, and while working on cars and trucks. No matter the conditions, these coveralls always keep me warm."

A **General Motors** Geo Metro 4-door sedan equipped with a 4-cyl. gas engine and automatic transmission rates as his "worst buy". "The dealer wouldn't honor the warranty when we had problems because we weren't taking the car to him for regular oil changes or other maintenance work. After the car was only six years old the engine blew up, even though we had changed the oil regularly every 2,000 miles. The engine would've cost more to repair than what the car was worth."

**Edward Robinson, Milton, Vt.:** Edward's happy with his 2001 **Dodge** Ram 3500 pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and 6-speed transmission. "I got the high output engine which, combined with the 6-speed transmission, gives this pickup a lot of towing power. I use it to pull loaded wagons at speeds up to 50 mph on the highway."

"On the 'worst buy' side, he lists his 1999 **Case-IH** 8920 4-WD tractor. "A big problem is that I can't see the drawbar when backing up. That's because the fuel tank is located right behind the rear window. Also, the engine idles too high. After two years I traded

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