

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

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Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy
Send your nominations to:
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,
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the survey form on our website at
www.FARMSHOW.com,
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Malcolm Hickman, Hana, Hawaii: “The Fire Hose Work Pants I bought from **Duluth Trading Company** are durable and comfortable (ph 800 505-8888; www.duluthtrading.com). These are really good pants and are advertised to be as tough as an angry beaver’s teeth, which they are. They repel water and have 11 pockets, so I can almost carry enough tools to rebuild an engine.”

Chad Kremer, Keystone, S. Dak.: A 2008 **Bobcat T320** tracked multi-terrain loader bought used rates as Chad’s “best buy”. “It was well-maintained by the previous owner and now has about 3,500 hrs. on it. Works great in hills and woods and will climb almost anything, far better than a wheeled machine. It also has good hydraulic capacity. I use it for general ranch work and for logging and tree work. It’s also more stable than a wheeled machine.”

“I find that **Ariat** boots are comfortable and priced right, but unfortunately the soles on them can’t be replaced. I usually wear out the soles on my boots before anything else. I’ve owned 2 pairs of these boots in the last several years, one a winter-insulated pair that I was able to wear for only a few months of

hasn’t had any trouble with them. But my mower has experienced broken belts about every 12 to 15 hrs., and the engine vibrates terribly. The dealer says the belts aren’t covered by the warranty and that I must be abusing the machine, and he wouldn’t even acknowledge the engine vibration.

“I contacted the company, but they also ignored the vibration problem and said I had to purchase any needed parts from the dealer. I’ve spent hundreds of dollars on belts and clutches on this machine, even though it has less than 200 hrs. on it. On the other hand, my friend has put several thousand hours on his mower with no problems. But since neither the company nor the dealer will stand behind my machine, I can’t recommend it to anyone.”

James Olson, Butte, N. Dak.: “My **Harbor Freight** 45-watt solar panel kit is well-built and reasonably priced. It comes with a charge controller, lights and all the necessary wiring.”

Dennis Craig Coulter, Chaplin, Ky.: Dennis has had problems with his 2006 **Dodge Ram 1500 2-WD** shortbed pickup equipped with a standard cab and a 4.7-liter, V-8 engine. “The radio stopped working, the right front wheel bearing went out, and foam fell out of the seat before the pickup even had 30,000 miles on it. The dealer refused to fix the wheel bearing despite a company recall, saying my vehicle was out of the VIN (vehicle identification number) range of affected vehicles.

“The pickup’s rear end went out at about 60,000 miles, and the main engine computer went bad at about 70,000 miles, and cost \$1,000 to repair. The pressure relief tube on the gas tank is too small, which causes gas to spew out of the fill hole when filling. All 3 heater duct doors broke because the hinges are made of plastic instead of metal. The company won’t help pay for any of these defects. This pickup’s fuel efficiency has never topped 14 mpg.”

John Zaborny, Jackson, Mich.: “It’s the best chainsaw I’ve ever owned,” says John about his 2008 **Stihl MS 250**. “I burn 75 cords of wood per year to heat my home and 2 garages, as well as provide hot water. I’ve gone through a lot of different saws over the years, but this one never runs out of power and has been trouble-free. It still has the original starter rope.

“My 2012 **Makita** 14-in. chainsaw is unbalanced and hurts my shoulder whenever I use it. The starter rope broke in the first week, the gas primer bulb cracked, and the chain came off and bent the bar. When I returned the saw to the company they told me it had been misused, yet I had not even run a gallon of gas through it yet.”

Dennis Divine, Joplin, Mo.: Dennis is impressed with his 2010 **Morton** 24 by 30-ft. pole barn/garage/workshop. “This building came as a kit delivered from Winfield, Kan., and putting it together was the simplest construction project I’ve ever done. I had no worries about when or if the job would get done. Last year I had the company install optional snow-jacks on the roof for added safety. While less expensive metal buildings are certainly available, you get what you pay for. No regrets.

“Last year I bought a used 2011 **Honda** Pilot SUV with low miles, and it’s the most reliable car I’ve ever owned. It has a solid body without any squeaks or rattles, and it gets up to 28.2 mpg even though it weighs 4,600 lbs. I use full-synthetic Mobil 1 oil in it.

“My 2012 **Deere** X324 lawn tractor is also a best buy. Really gets the job done.”

Vaun D. Mickelsen, Manti, Utah: “I’m still using my 1950’s **International** MTA tractor which is equipped with power steering and a front-end loader. I use it to plow snow,

the year. The boots are constructed with a foot bed made from a plastic-type material that cracks and breaks apart. A boot repairman told me that he could resole the boots if it wasn’t for that problem.

“They’re probably a fine boot for city folks, but not for anyone who uses them for every day work. No more Ariat boots for me.”

Tom Johnstin, Marietta, Penn.: “It’s a good, multi-use utility vehicle that saves me a lot of steps going between farms and buildings,” says Tom about his 2012 **Honda** Big Red. “I use the bed to haul tools as well as firewood, rocks, dirt, hay and other material. It has a handy dump lever. I also use this machine to tow my log splitter to the job site. It works great in all conditions, including snow and mud. The bench seat has enough room for 3 people.”

Nelson Zimmerman, Myerstown, Penn.: Nelson’s satisfied with his 2004 **Kubota** ZD21 diesel-powered zero-turn riding mower. “It has about 700 hrs. on it, and the only problem was an ignition module that went bad at about 600 hrs. It cost \$250 to replace, which was no big deal. This machine uses very little fuel and has a lot of power. My next riding mower will be another Kubota.”

Robert J. Sherman, Chaumont, N.Y.: “I own 3 **Deere** 10-20 gas-powered utility tractors that I really like. One was purchased new with a mechanical trip loader that I still use. I bought the other 2 used, and one of them has a hydraulic-operated trip loader. The 10-20 was one of the few tractors of its time that had hydraulic brakes. Two of the tractors have more than 9,000 hrs. on them.”

Rocky McLarty, Rockmart, Ga.: Rocky’s had problems with his new **Gravely** 48-in. zero-turn riding mower. “A friend who is a commercial landscaper bought 2 **Gravely** 48-in. zero-turn mowers on the same day and