

### 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,  
Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use  
the survey form on our website at  
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**Jason Benton, Monte Vista, Colo.:** “I installed a **Diesel Tunes** Performance Chip in my 8120 Deere near the end of the summer. I didn’t notice much difference when baling, but when plowing down alfalfa this fall I gained a gear or two, letting me plow about a mile an hour faster with a 6-bottom plow.

“I took the 8120 into my dealer and had him put it on the dyno. It was running at 200 hp with the chip off and 260 with the chip turned up high. The dealer didn’t see any problems with my using the chip.”

Diesel Tunes owner Gary Gavin explains the three power settings on the ECU (engine control unit) chip let Benton fine-tune his engine for its workload. The chip fits between the sensors and the tractor’s computer and doesn’t alter or reprogram the computer. It just recalculates sensor values. Gavin notes that manufacturers like Deere tune engines for general use parameters. His chip fine-tunes engine operation for specific power demand parameters at low, medium and high power. This raises available horsepower and torque by 20 to 30 percent and can lower fuel use by 20 percent.

“Switching from low to high, I can tell the tractor operation is changing a bit,” says

being a wheel alignment. It’s the best pickup I’ve ever owned.”

**Georgia Lovegren, Clatskanie, Ore.:** “My 2005 **Kioti** DK 35 4-WD loader tractor was reasonably priced and is built with quality equal to most of the higher-priced tractor models on the market. Also, the fuel mileage is excellent and the controls are easy to use. It’s equipped with a 4-speed transmission and 2-speed rear end differential lock.”

**David Millsap, Abingdon, Va.:** David’s “best buy” is his 1960 **Deere** 730 diesel tractor. “Even though this tractor is more than 50 years old it still works as good as newer models with more power. It uses one third less fuel than the New Holland 7610 model that it replaced. It pulls a Deere 435 round baler with ease.”

**Calvin L. Yoder, Sterling, Alaska:** “I bought my 1998 **Yamaha** Timber Wolf 250 4-wheeler used three years ago and have used it for everything from hunting to everyday chores. We haven’t spared this machine either - I’m sure the company wouldn’t recommend doing some of the things we’ve done with it. It has been trouble-free.”

**Richard J. Fryzek, Loveland, Colo.:** Richard’s impressed with **Ondura** corrugated asphalt roofing (ph 800 777-7663; www.ondura.com). “It comes in eight colors and is tough yet easy to use, and hail resistant. It seems like it’ll last forever.”

**Joe Germuga, Rochester, N.Y.:** “My **Sears Craftsman** 19.2-volt cordless drill has a lot of power and the battery lasts a long time, even with continuous use. I like it better than my Ryobi, Makita and Harbor Freight cordless drills.

“In my experience **Harbor Freight** metal drill bits don’t hold an edge, and they break too easily.”

**Doug Creswell, Mount Airy, Md.:** Doug likes the 2011 metal carport he bought from **Carolina Carports Inc.** (www.carolinacarportsinc.com). The carport measures 14 ft. wide by 26 ft. long and has 10-ft. high sides. “I use it to shelter my RV trailer. You can order it through the internet and design your own building online. The company promptly delivered the carport and it was installed in 2 1/4 hours by a well-trained crew. It’s built with high quality materials all the way around, and is reasonably priced.”

**Ernie Tweedy, Oxford, Ark.:** He’s had problems with his **Sears Craftsman** 48-in. GT 5000 riding mower equipped with a 26 hp, 2-cyl. Briggs & Stratton engine. “The first year the engine failed when the push rods fell out and got bent up. Neither Briggs and Stratton nor Sears would help so I paid the Sears service shop to fix it. The machine ran for only about three more hours before the same problem happened again. The local rep confirmed the problem and made the repair.

“The second year the transmission went out. A local repair shop found the transmission input shaft was rounded off, so a new shaft was installed. The third year the transmission’s top gear went out, making the machine unusable as a mower.”

**Lloyd Nanney, Union Mills, N.C.:** “It’s the best vehicle I’ve ever owned, bar none,” says Lloyd about his 2003 **Dodge** 3500 65P dually pickup. “It’s really fuel efficient and has a lot of power. No problems. It has about 52,000 miles on it. All I’ve replaced are the front tires.”

On the “worst buy” side, “My 1990 **Ford** F-150 pickup skipped and missed from day one. The dealer spent more time with this pickup than I did for the first three months. I tried to get him to replace it because of North Carolina’s lemon law, but he just told me to hire a lawyer. I was a Ford man for 35 years, but not any more.”

**Clinton McNett, Brooklyn, Mich.:** Clinton’s had problems with his **Eden Pure** electric heater. “It didn’t work so I returned

Benton. “I have yet to see if fuel savings are affected as we just keep topping it off when baling and plowing. Next spring when we get into fieldwork, I’ll get a chance to really see it work.”

Diesel Tunes makes chips for a wide variety of trucks, heavy equipment, RV’s and ag equipment. Ag brands include Case IH, Deere, New Holland, Massey Ferguson and others. Gavin says his ag chips are made specifically for ag equipment, suggesting that most performance altering chips are designed for street use. He warns that chips that require uploading new profiles to the on-board computer can affect the warranty.

**Daniel Patrick, Galena, Alaska:** “I have a **Chomper** Model 16 firewood processor that cuts, splits and loads wood (Ranier Hydraulics; www.chomper.net; 800-457-9136). It has had several owners over the years. I use it to process driftwood out of the Yukon River. The wood is dirty and sandy. The Chomper is the only processor I’ve ever seen that will hold up to these kinds of tough conditions. Works without fail. It was expensive but is well made. Same old story - you get what you pay for.”

**Bryce Worley, Holyoke, Colo.:** A 1982 **Deere** 4440 tractor rates as Bryce’s “best buy”. “It has more than 10,000 hours on it with only a few minor problems. Always starts.”

**Norma E. Purcell, Bloomfield, Ind.:** “I’m 83 years old and my **Deere** Gator 620I utility vehicle makes it easier to take care of things around the farm. I use it to check on fences and cattle, to gather garden produce, and to keep the yard picked up.”

**Jack McMurry, Farson, Wyo.:** “It has amazing power and is a joy to drive,” says Jack about his 2007 **Chevrolet** Silverado 3500 dually Duramax diesel pickup. “It has about 80,000 miles with the only major repair