

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Pickups

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truck bed (Stellar Industries, 280 W. Third St., Garner, Iowa 50438 ph 515 923-3741). It works well in our business."

Alvin Schmitz, Minot, N. Dak.: "My 1990 Ford F-150 Lariat pickup is dependable and trouble-free but could be more fuel efficient. I bought a front-end guard and a cab-height Glasstite topper for it. If I was in the market for a new pickup I'd buy a Ford F-150 Super Cab, 2-WD, short bed model equipped with a 4.6-liter engine."

John R. Morse, Hampton, N.J.: "It has a lot of power and handles well," reports John, impressed with his 1994 Dodge Ram 2500 Laramie SLT 4-WD pickup equipped with a V-8 Magnum engine. "We use it mostly for light hauling jobs and for going to town for parts. One problem is that it needs bigger brakes. It has only 89,000 miles on it and is already on its third set of brakes. Our 1986 Ford 250 has more than 158,000 miles and is only on its second set of brakes. We installed a Schuck cushion hitch. It works great for pulling wagons, because it eliminates the slamming and jerking. We've owned every brand of pickup made in the U.S. since 1949 and, even though I like this Dodge, I think Ford is the best."

Max Grossnickle, Erie, Kan.: Max nominates his 1983 Chevrolet 3/4-ton 4-WD equipped with a diesel engine as his "best buy". "It has about 180,000 miles on it but still runs great. I used to live in northwest Iowa and it was one of the few older diesel-powered pickups round that would start when the temperature got below zero. My only complaint is that the gauges are hard to read."

Clifford Hagan, Princeton, Mo.: Clifford says his 1983 Ford Ranger 2-WD pickup is neither a "best" nor a "worst" buy. "It runs well but I wish it had a 4:10 rear end and a bigger engine. I wish the company made the Ranger as big as the Dodge Dakota and offered the 4.0-liter V-6 engine as standard equipment with an optional 4.6-liter V-8 engine. They should also make the anti spin rear end standard on 2-WD models and offer a 4:10 to 4:50 rear axle ratio. If I was in the market now I'd probably buy a Ford or Dodge 1-ton Club Cab model equipped with a V-10 engine and a 6-speed manual transmission."

Roland J. Heim, Dexter, Mich.: "My 2000 Ford Ranger is fuel efficient and has a cab that's easy to get in and out of."

Stanley Haag, Coffeyville, Kan.: "My 1995 Dodge 4-WD equipped with a V-10 engine has a lot of power, is a pleasure to drive, and does a good job of pulling trailers. One complaint is that the low side of the automatic transmission shifts too rough. I added a fifth wheel hitch, brush guard, and running boards."

Garry Neitzel, Cedar Lake, Ind.: "My 1996 Dodge 1500 Ram pickup is comfortable and has a lot of power. The one problem I've had is with the air conditioner. There have also been a few recalls but I've never had to go without it for more than a day at a time. The company has kept me well informed about any problems. I put long running boards on it which I really like. I could use a heavier truck so if I were in the market I'd probably buy a Dodge 3500 4-WD model."

Robert H. Imbler, Parma, Idaho: "I like my 1997 Nissan King Cab pickup."

William L. Swan, Tampico, Ill.: "I like

my 2000 GM 1500 4-WD. It's not a heavy truck, but I bought it in place of a car. It's about as fuel efficient as a luxury car and has a lot of the same equipment as my 1989 Lincoln. I think the steering is built a lot heavier than necessary, and the engine oil fill should have a longer neck. The parking brake pedal hangs out too far in the door opening so that I often accidentally catch my pants cuff on it when getting in. Also, the push button 4-WD is slow to engage in cold weather."

Robert J. Considine, Fulton, Ill.: Robert's the satisfied owner of a 1993 Chevrolet S-10 pickup equipped with a V-6 engine and automatic transmission. "It has a lot of power and gets 20 mpg on short trips

"The steering is built a lot heavier than necessary, and the engine oil fill should have a longer neck."

and 25 mpg on long highway trips. I don't know how they'll ever change the spark plugs because they're hard to get at, but I have over 70,000 miles on the original plugs and the pickup's performance and fuel economy are still fine. I've replaced the battery as well as the starter motor, and I bought a vinyl-covered canvas top for the box and also a toolbox."

Edward Mooney, Thief River Falls, Minn.: "I'm generally satisfied with my 1994 Chevrolet 1500. However, it could turn shorter and be more fuel efficient. Also, the heater controls are a nightmare. Also, it takes way too long to switch into 4-WD."

Olav Isane, Broton, Minn.: "I'm well satisfied with my 1999 Chevrolet 1/2-ton 4-WD extended cab, short bed pickup. It has a nice, quiet ride, and I really like the push button 4-WD. I'd always like to see better fuel economy, but this pickup is as good as on other brands we've had."

Orville Brokaw, Wilder, Idaho: Orville nominates his 1997 Dodge 1-ton dually pickup, equipped with a Cummins diesel engine, as his "best buy". "I'm happy with its performance and fuel economy. No problems. However, I wish the speed control wasn't located on the steering wheel."

LeRoy Johnson, Sauk Centre, Minn.: "I'm generally satisfied with my 1991 Dodge 150. It should work good because it never gets misused or handled rough."

Ruben Michaletz, Glencoe, Minn.: "I like my 1997 Ford F-150 equipped with a 4.6-liter, V-8 engine. It's easy on fuel and I don't know how it could be improved. It's equipped with a factory trailer hitch. I added striping, as well as a stainless steel cover below the door and along the bottom."

Stanley R. Nelson, Center Point, Iowa: Stanley's "best buy" is his 1997 GM Sierra SLE 1500 4-WD pickup equipped with a 350 cu. in. engine. "I bought it with most of the available options including the snow plow mounting option, but I haven't put a plow on it yet. The engine on this pickup still has cast iron heads. I think GM made a mistake when it switched to aluminum heads in 1999. When the aluminum heads get hot, they'll warp. Farmers use their pickups like tractors so they're bound to get hot."

David C. Praise, China Spring, Texas: David's had a lot of problems with his 1988

Chevrolet 3500 1-ton Silverado extended cab 4-WD pickup equipped with a 4:10 posi-track differential. "The engine and power train are pretty good so it pulls good and will carry a big load. It gets about 10 mpg. However, most of the accessories are junk. I've always had problems with the electric windows. The windshield wiper motor is faulty, and I had to replace both tail light assemblies at \$40 apiece. Also, the radio and air conditioner are very poor. If the air conditioner is operating on high I can't even hear the radio. The heater core leaked and had to be replaced three times. The radiator had to be replaced at a cost of \$325 because it was too small for the air conditioner. There are no grease fittings on the front end so I had to spend \$700 on front-end work. I also had to replace the 34-gal. gas tank, fuel gauge, and fuel pump at a cost of \$430. The problem was that a baffle broke loose inside the tank."

"I don't abuse trucks. I have a 1966 Chevrolet 1/2-ton pickup with more than 300,000 miles on it and it still has the original ball joints."

Roger Kirby, Lamont, Okla.: "My 1995 Ford F-250 equipped with a Power Stroke engine has a lot of power. No problems though. I wish it had a 2-speed rear axle. I also wish they'd go back to using a linkage system for the clutch. You spend \$30,000 for a new pickup and you know that when it gets 50,000 to 70,000 miles you're going to have to put in a new hydraulic clutch. I would like the hood to open to expose the radiator like on Dodges."

Walter J. Weaver, Sprakers, N.Y.: "It has more than 150,000 hard miles on it, but just keeps on going. It still has the original exhaust system," says Walter, pleased with his 1988 Ford F-250. "One negative is that I don't care for the twin I-beam front axle - I'd prefer a straight axle."

Walter Rau, Columbia, Ill.: "So far it's been a good pickup and has never let me

down," says Walter about his 1990 Ford F-150. "There are no rust spots showing on it anywhere. The fuel economy could be somewhat better for a small engine. If I were in the market for a new pickup it would probably be a Chevy 3/4-ton equipped with a tow package. The reason it will be a Chevy is that the company has the GM Master Card which helps pay for the truck."

Robert Crampton, Staples, Minn.: Robert's impressed with his 1989 Chevrolet 3/4-ton extended cab 4-WD longbed pickup equipped with a 350 cu. in. gas engine. "We love it in heavy traffic. We feel safer than we do in our car. We use it to plow snow in our yard, as well as along about a mile of road and in several feedlots and wood lots. The rest of the year this pickup is used as a jack of all trades. It rides like my old Buick Roadmaster. I've equipped it with a lot of accessories including a 7 1/2-ft. snowplow, bug and snow deflector, box liner, Contico toolbox, extra fuel tank, Luvener running boards, Reese receiver hitch, and Country Squire radial tires."

"I understand that GM is coming out with a new GM-Isuzu pickup that will be equipped with a direct injection diesel engine and 5-speed automatic transmission, and will have an all-plastic box and front fenders. However, my old 1989 model still looks pretty good so I'll probably keep it for a long time."

Gene Oberleas, Bremen, Ind.: A 1995 Dodge Ram 2500 equipped with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine and automatic transmission rates as Gene's "best buy". "It has nice style and good fuel economy and I like how it handles on the highway. I don't know how this pickup could be improved. I bought it used less than a year ago. It has more accessories than I ever expected to get in a pickup."

Robert Konen, Aurora, Ill.: "Our 1974 Chevrolet pickup is set up for a gooseneck



New "Royal Sport" body offers up to 34 cubic ft. of out-of-sight, lockable storage space on a factory-look body. Comes with 8 or 9-ft. beds.

Ford's Optional Pickup Body Features Lockable Compartments

The new "Royal Sport" body for Ford Super Duty pickups is offered through Ford dealers nationwide. The big bed offers up to 34 cubic ft. of out-of-sight, lockable storage space on a factory-look body. Comes with 8 or 9-ft. beds.

It features in-line automotive handles on the storage boxes, sealed-gas shocks to hold doors open, and eight big compartments including two that are long enough to hold fishing rods, guns or baseball bats. Four of the compartments have hinged doors and two have 8-in. high roll-out drawers. The side-opening compartments have adjustable lock-in-place shelves.

There are removable inserts to accommodate small parts such as nuts and bolts. All spaces are completely weather-stripped and have locks and hidden hinges for security.

The 8-ft. beds are designed for Ford F-250/350 pickups and the 9-ft. beds for F-350/450/550 models. Both beds are available in either regular cab, crew cab or Super Cab configurations.

Ladder racks, covers, and various trailer hitch options are available, as well as a gooseneck hitch ball or fifth wheel hitch.

The special bed adds \$5,000 to \$8,000 to the cost of a truck, depending on the dealer and pickup model.