

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

Harry Craft, Eagle Rock, Va.: "I'm the second owner of a 1986 Ford Ranger 4-WD pickup with more than 297,000 miles on it. I've spent very little money on it, and it goes like a mountain goat. I've owned many Ford products and never had one that didn't far exceed my expectations."

Jim Gray, N. Cambria, Penn.: "FARM SHOW is my best buy. Over the years I've subscribed to many magazines, but yours has the most practical ideas, and it's also fun to read."

Frazier Paugh, Palmyra, Mo.: Frazier's the proud owner of a Chevrolet Silverado extended cab pickup equipped with a Duramax diesel engine. "The extended cab comes in handy for carrying extra passengers. I didn't think I'd like the split bench seat but I do. I also like the Duramax engine."

On the negative side, he lists his BCS 945 garden tiller. "The tines turn forward instead of backward. As a result, we have to make an extra trip across the garden for each row we make. We wanted the tines to turn backward but were told that isn't possible. The only good thing is that we got an electric start model which is much easier to run than a pull start."

Loyal Ressler, Nappanee, Ind.: "My 2002 McCormick C-90 tractor is my best buy. It steers and shifts easy, runs quiet, and has more power than an IH 806 model. It's also easy on fuel, and all the controls on it are easy to reach."

T. Kirk, Edgerton, Mo.: "Our Tree Lounge deer stand is our worst buy. After testing it out, we think this stand is dangerous, particularly when you're trying to climb up or down the tree. We asked for our money back, but the company refused."

Yvonne Trujillo, Cimarron, N. M.: "The worst buy recently submitted by M.L. Lindsay of West Monroe, La., on a Whirlpool dishwasher caught my attention. I had the same problem with my Whirlpool dishwasher not getting my dishes clean or heating the water. I found out that my water pressure was too low, which was causing the water level in the dishwasher to be so low that it affected the wash and heating cycle. Ever since I corrected this problem I have beautifully clean dishes. They might have either low pressure or a kinked hose. They can check this by opening the door when the dishwasher is in the wash cycle. If very little water is being sloshed around, that's the problem."

John S. Houston, Topsham, Maine: "My Paslode framing nail gun is the handiest tool I've ever owned. It's powered by a gas 'fuel cell'. A single gas bottle will drive about



2,000 3-in. nails. I really like not having to drag any air hoses or electric cords around. I bought it at Home Depot and paid a little less than \$300 for it.

"My 1999 GM 6500 pickup is my worst buy. It's painted black, but it should be painted yellow because it's a real lemon. It has less than 15,000 miles on it but has already been in the garage eight times. Some

of the repairs were covered under warranty but some were not but should have been. The rear disc brakes wore through when the pickup had only about 7,000 miles on it and cost about \$900 to replace. The company wouldn't help at all. A hole developed in the hood because the tank for coolant water was mounted too high at the factory. I had to fight to get that covered under warranty. Overall, the company hasn't provided good service. I've been a loyal GM customer over the years, but this will be the last GM product I'll ever buy."

Terry Cofer, Searcy, Ark.: "I like my Posi-lock gear pullers (Posi Lock Puller, Inc., ph 800 533-5761 or website: www.posilock.com). When you lock them on



a sprocket or a race, they won't slip off.

"My Power-Luber cordless grease gun is my worst buy. If you buy one you'd better get two batteries because you'll run one down trying to get it to pick up the grease every time you put in a new cartridge. I called the company and they told me I didn't know how to load the gun, but their way didn't work any better. I wish I had my money back."

Ron McCoy, Crookston, Neb.: "My worst buy is a Deere 637 26 1/2-ft. disk that I bought new three years ago. I traded away an International 490 for it. It didn't work right so the dealer sent a man out who worked on it all day to no avail. It still didn't do a decent job of disking so the company sent out a trouble shooter. Unfortunately, I knew more than he did. So a year later Deere sent out two engineers from the factory. They were on the cell phone all the time they were working on it. They thought they had it fixed, but after they left it still didn't do a decent job of disking. This disk has a 3-bar harrow on back that's so unbalanced it eventually caused two bolts in my tractor drawbar to break. The engineers told me this disk was designed on a computer. I've now purchased a Sunflower disk that works great. My dealer told me the company won't do anything else to help out."

Terry L. Guntharp, Jonesboro, Ark.: "My 2002 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 heavy duty crew cab pickup equipped with a turbo-charged diesel engine and Allison transmission is my best buy. It has about 24,500 miles and performs great. I really like the way the engine and transmission work together when hauling a load, especially when I'm driving on hills. The engine has a lot of power on take-off and runs great empty or loaded. When I first bought this pickup it got about 16 mpg. The more I drive it, the more fuel efficient it gets. I'm now getting about 20 mpg."

"I just read an your last issue about a 1996 Chevrolet Suburban that the owners had a lot of trouble with it. They said they had bought the vehicle new and had broken it in 'gently'. In my opinion, this was the wrong thing to do. I've been buying new cars and trucks since 1972 and I break them in like I'm going to drive them for the rest of the vehicle's life. I haven't had any major problems with any of these vehicles within the first 100,000 miles. I've always been told you should break a vehicle in just like you're going to drive it."

"My 1975 International Harvester 564 tractor equipped with a 6-cyl. diesel engine is a best buy. I bought it used in 1985 and have used it hard every summer since then to

cut and rake hay and feed hay during the winter. I've also used this tractor a lot to operate a Bush Hog mower. The clutch had to be replaced twice and the water pump once. Otherwise no problems."

Gary Lichti, Millbank, Ontario: "We like our 2003 Case-IH Maxxum 175 tractor. It has a comfortable ride and a lot of power."

"Our 1990 Case-IH 5120 85 hp loader tractor is a best buy. We put about 13,000 hours on the first engine before we had to replace it. The new engine is still going strong."

"The Surge Westfalia automatic take-offs we use on our milk cows have performed flawlessly."

William De Baca, Mesita, Colo.: "I'm well pleased with my 1991 Chevrolet S10 4-WD pickup equipped with a 4.3-liter, V-6 engine. It has 180,000 miles on it and is still running strong. It has been a very dependable vehicle and averages 22 to 28 mpg."

Nicholas Jansen, Coos Bay, Ore.: "My 1984 Mitsubishi (Satoh) 670D tractor equipped with a diesel engine is my best buy. I bought it from a dealer who was going out of business for \$7,400, and he sold me all the parts books, etc., for \$10. The only problem I've had was an 85 cent snap ring that broke, allowing a front wheel to come off. This tractor has about 1,100 hours on it. I use it to operate a wood chipper, 60-in. tiller, post hole digger, grader blade, disc, plow, and wood splitter. I also use it for yarding logs and building roads."

"My Husqvarna 136 chain saw is my worst buy. I bought it for use around our tree farm. It came with a one-year warranty. At 16 months the motor stopped working. The dealer's only response was that I must have sharpened the chain wrong and made it work too hard. I won't buy another Husqvarna product again."

John Relihan, Brunswick, Ga.: "My 1989 Dodge Dakota pickup is my best buy. After 14 years it still doesn't use any oil."

"My 1999 Packard-Bell desk top computer is my worst buy. It never worked as it was supposed to and crashed often. It went through two power supplies in one year. The week after the warranty expired, the computer went "blue-screen". I trashed it and bought a Dell computer."

Lockwood Doench, Bethel, Ohio: Lockwood likes his 2002 Toro 300 series Wheel Horse Classic garden tractor equipped with a 15 hp Kohler engine and 8-speed transmission. "This machine is built with quality. We use it to pull a ground-driven manure spreader and also to mow small pastures."

On the minus side, he lists his 1997 Ford F-350 Dually pickup equipped with a 460 cu. in. engine. "At 25,000 miles the exhaust pipe deformed where it attached to the exhaust manifold, causing the oxygen sensor to have a false reading. The pickup started running badly, but the dealer said there was nothing wrong. We had a replacement pipe installed by an independent repair shop. The pipe was redesigned to prevent the problem from happening again. Too bad the dealer didn't know how to solve this problem."

Russ Zortman, Woodland, Penn.: "My 1995 DeWalt 14.4-volt cordless drill is my all-time best buy. It's eight years old but will still drill 1/2-in. dia. holes in 1/4-in. thick plate steel. The only maintenance it ever required was a new chuck about five years ago. With just one spare battery pack, I'm ready for any drilling task on our place."

"My all-time worst buy is the Briggs & Stratton Elite series electric generator I bought last February. The first time I tried to use it, the carburetor iced up so bad the engine wouldn't even run. When I called the toll-free help line, I was told to put the unit

back inside the box and use it that way, cutting out a hole for the muffler. While this did work, it seems a strange solution. After using the unit for four months, it stopped working. I again called the help line and was given the name of the nearest warranty center. The generator sat there for two months without being repaired."

"I recently hauled the engine to another warranty center about 30 miles away and am curious how long it will be there. After several calls to the help line, I was given several excuses as to why no one will fix this generator, give me another one, or refund my money."

Vern Hillyer, Ariel, Wash.: "In the summer of 2001, my Deere 345 riding mower went up in smoke after the engine caught fire. That fall I took delivery on a new Deere 445 garden tractor equipped with a vacuum blower and rear-mounted bags, which is my best buy. My only complaint is that I spent more time emptying the bags than I did mowing. To solve the problem I replaced the bags with a 2-ft. long by 3-ft. wide by 3 1/2-ft. high wooden box and hooked the blower up to it."

"I used 2-in. sq. tubing and angle iron to make a bracket that mounts on back of the mower. The box mounts on this bracket and is made from 1/2-in. particle board mounted inside a frame made from 1 1/2 and 2-in. angle iron. There's a small trap door on top of the box so I can check inside from the seat. The back side of the box is hinged, and the bottom side is removable for easy cleaning. I made a 12-in. sq. extension of the blower

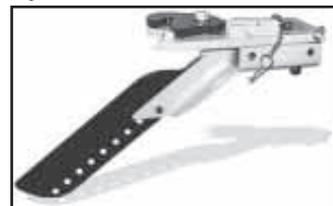


tube that hooks up to the box and is filled in with 1/2-in. hardware cloth. I had to extend the hardware cloth down lower for better exhaust. I painted the box black and Deere green. A trailer hitch is built into the box's frame."

"I mounted two rings on top of the box. By attaching a short chain and using an overhead hoist I can raise and lower the box onto the tractor adaptor. I also added 106 lbs. on front of the tractor."

Douglas Koehn, Lehigh, Kansas: Douglas is impressed with his two Deere self-propelled rotary disc mowers - a 2002 4990 model and a 2003 4995. "We use them in our custom business to cut up to 10,000 acres each year. We can cut almost 20 acres per hour at speeds up to 14 mph in the field. The disc heads and impeller conditioners require very little maintenance."

Don Bulechek, Iowa City, Iowa: Don's impressed with his Attach Matic automatic



hitch that lets you automatically hook up wagons and trailers without getting off the tractor (Attach-Matic Inc., ph 800 230-9077 (Canada) or 800 554-7115 (U.S.); website: www.foodonline.com). The hitch is available in different models and can be used with tractors, balers and silage choppers. It consists of two parts - one that installs on the tractor,