

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

(Continued from previous page)

on it with no problems," reports Bob, pleased with his 1996 **Case-IH 5250** front wheel assist tractor. "I'm impressed with this tractor's maneuverability in tight spaces. It's also fuel efficient."

Henry C. Gutchak, Clio, Mich.: "It's one of the best loaders on the market," says Henry about his 2000 **Westendorf** front-end loader. "I use it on my 1967 Allis Chalmers D17 tractor. I have a New Idea 486 round baler that makes 5 by 6 bales, and this loader picks them up with ease. One person can quickly change from bucket to bale spear without having to get off the tractor."

Marvin Knoop, Shell Lake, Wis.: A 1984 **Roper** riding mower equipped with a 42-in. deck and 3-pt. mounted 4-ft. tiller rates as Marvin's "best buy." "The tractor is powered by a Briggs & Stratton 16 hp gas engine that still has the original spark plugs in it. I've replaced two belts and a few bearings in the mower deck. Otherwise, no problems. Unfortunately, the company that made it is no longer in business."

Jerry Duerkop, New River, Arizona: Two years ago Jerry bought a used 1999 GM 1/2-ton extended cab, 3-door Sierra pickup equipped with a 5.3-liter, V-8 engine. It's his "best buy." "It has a quiet, comfortable ride, and handles well. It now has more than 55,000 miles on it. The only problem happened when a wire came off an electric window motor on one of the doors."

Francis Puype, Payson, Ariz.: "It has more than 175,000 miles on it but still drives like new," says Francis, pleased with his 1997 **Dodge** 1500 pickup. "It has been back to the garage only once, and that was just for a new fan clutch."

Dick Hufford, Morris, Minn.: "I'm happy with my 1999 **Ford F-150** pickup equipped with a 5.4-liter Vortec engine. It has a lot of power and has no trouble pulling a loaded 24-ft. livestock trailer. I put a set of Timbren rubber springs on the rear axle in order to make the pickup run level."

Edward R. Schumann, Maynard, Minn.: "My wife bought me a **DeWalt** 14.4-volt cordless electric drill for Christmas three years ago, and I like it a lot. Everything on it works great. However, the batteries don't hold their charge very long. I think the company should come up with an improved replacement model and offer it to all owners of the current model at a discount."

Dorman Olson, Peerless, Montana: "I've used my 1979 **Deere** 850 tractor and model

72 mower to cut five acres of grass and to do other small jobs, and neither the tractor nor mower has required any repairs. They're both best buys."

Donald Albright, Perkins, Okla.: Donald is the satisfied owner of a **Rhino Tuffy** 6-ft. brush cutter. "It's light enough that my 50 hp tractor can pick it up, yet it's tough enough for any mowing job. I can go one gear faster than I can with any other mower and it still does a great job."

Erling Swiggum, Dodgeville, Wis.: A 2001 **Kubota** 4-WD tractor rates as Erling's "best buy." "It starts easy in cold weather and drives nice. The muffler is mounted low so I don't have to worry about knocking it off when going through doors, etc. I like being able to go in 4-WD both forward and backward. Also, this tractor is easy on fuel. If I ever do run out of fuel it'll start right back up again without having to be primed first."

Ray V. McDeid, Mead, Wash.: "My Meg-

"Almost everything on this pickup failed."

Mo lawn mower blades are my worst buy. Early last March I wrote company owner Roy Megli a letter, enclosing a close-up photo of my 6-ft., 3-blade, 3-pt. finish mower and inquiring about his blades. He called me on March 31, saying he could make a 3-blade set and ship them the following week. I agreed to let him charge my Visa \$224.85 which included shipping and handling. After two phone calls, I finally received the blades 37 days after placing the order.

"I had my blades off and was putting the new ones on when I discovered he had sent the wrong blades. My photo clearly showed I needed left hand, counter clockwise blades, but he sent the opposite. He offered to send me the correct blades but I declined and told him I didn't like his blades. They're built too light, and he sent the wrong ones and I didn't have time to unbolt and bolt a dozen blades on account of his mistake.

"I had to argue with him to get him to agree to pay the shipping charge to return the blades. He wouldn't credit my Visa, but on May 8 he agreed to pay me the \$224.85 plus \$21 shipping (I didn't charge him 'handling')."

"I nominate **FARM SHOW** as my best buy. I save each issue for a long time, then

when they get dog-eared and worn, I pass them on to others."

Joshua Abernathy, Covington, Ind.: "My best buy is my **Sears Craftsman** 18-volt circular saw, drill, and flashlight set. It has more than enough power - the batteries on it stay charged longer than any other brand I've used. As a result, the saw cuts tough, treated hardwood lumber with ease.

"My **Mantis** rototiller is a best buy. My only complaint is that the dealer I purchased it from doesn't stock many spare parts such as special grease for the gearbox, air filters, or accessories. However, the rototiller itself works great. I'm really impressed with it."

Bob Moty, Crystal Lake, Ill.: "My **Pull Rite** Super Glide fifth wheel hitch is a best buy (Pulliam Enterprises, Inc., Mishawaka, Ind. ph 800 443-2307 or 219 259-1520; website: www.PullRite.com). It allows me to



pull a fifth wheel trailer with a shortbed pickup. It automatically moves up to 18 in. while making a turn, which is 50 percent more than other 'slider' hitches on the market.

"The hitch moves automatically as you make a turn, so you don't have to anticipate when you will want to make a turn and then get out and manually move the hitch like you do with other models. With those models, if you would forget to move the hitch before making a turn you could probably do about \$5,000 damage to your rig.

"Another advantage is that the hitch can rock fore and aft and also side to side. As far as I know, all other models on the market can move only fore and aft.

"Also, this hitch comes with mounting posts that leave a completely smooth, clean pickup bed when the hitch is removed. There are no base rails left in the way."

Bob Stewart, Fishers, Ind.: "My worst buy was not really a buy at all. I ordered six bags of Intellicoat-treated **Fielder's Choice** seed corn last winter for a comparison trial. When I got the seed it wasn't the treated seed that I ordered. In fact, it wasn't treated at all so I asked to return it. After many phone calls I finally got my refund but it was for \$136 less than what I paid. And that doesn't count the 80-mile trip I made to pick up the seed at the company's drop-off point or the 180-mile trip I made to return the seed to their seed plant. Not a bad profit for this company, considering they still have the product. I'll never buy from this company again."

Lorne C. Lange, Garnavillo, Iowa: "It's a wonderful tractor," says Lorne about his 1970 **Deere** 2640 equipped with a diesel engine. "We like it so much we keep it on display in our front yard."

Larry M. Preston, Pace, Fla.: "It has more than 324,000 miles on it but is still going strong," says Larry, satisfied owner of a 2000 **Ford F-250** 4-WD, 4-door, long wheel-base pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter turbo-charged engine and automatic transmission. "I use it to pull a 30-ft. gooseneck trailer. With a loaded trailer, total gross weight is 28,000 lbs. I replaced the water pump at 281,000 miles and the battery at 296,000 miles. I had to replace the second battery at 320,465 miles. I replaced the injector wiring harness and inside valve covers at 300,000 miles. The left front wheel hub and wheel bearing assembly

were replaced at 291,000 miles. Considering what I've put this pickup through, it has really held up well. I plan to see just how long it'll keep going."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his **Sony** digital camera. "It's cheaper to buy a new camera than to have this one repaired. I got no help from the company."

Mike Hanley, Cashton, Wis.: Mike nominates replacement V-belts sold by **Jay Dee Enterprises, Inc.** as his "best buy" (3465 Lost Nation Road, Unit 15, Willoughby, Ohio 44094 ph 800 989-0162 or 440 946-9367; website: www.jdv-belts.com). The company bills itself as a farm market supplier of "quality V-belts at economical prices." If they don't have a scarce replacement belt in stock, they can have one custom made.

"They sell an endless belt which can be cut to any length. It was a life saver for us," says Mike. "We used one on a 1960 **Deere** 430 crawler equipped with a **Deere** 90 loader. The hydraulic pump on this crawler is mounted up front, so to replace the fan belt and also the generator belt you have to just about totally disassemble the entire front end of the crawler. We broke the generator belt on a Sunday, and I ordered a replacement belt off the company's website that night. Monday morning I got an email from them stating that the order had been received. The package was delivered on Tuesday via Fed Ex, and ten minutes later we were rolling. The smallest order they take is 10 ft. so we have plenty left for future use.

"Our **Deere** 430 crawler is also a best buy. It has a factory 3-pt. and pto and is a handy little workhorse. Not everyone needs a big D8 Cat sitting in their shed. We totally rebuilt it from the radiator cap all the way back to the drawbar. We use it with a rotary mower in our pastures, and we also use it with a 3-pt. rear blade to move dirt. I would think there would be a market for this size crawler, except that today it would probably be made overseas and would be overpriced. If it were made again today it would have to be built with 1960's made-in-America quality."

"I like the **Pengo** auger teeth we mounted on our **Deere** 31 3-pt. posthole digger. The abuse this digger has been through in rocks is unbelievable but the teeth still look like new. I bought the auger teeth years ago while

"The abuse this digger has been through is unbelievable but the teeth still look like new."

they were still being made by an independent company located in California. The company has since been bought out and is now headquartered in Laurens, Iowa (ph 800 599-2011; website: www.pengocorp.com).

H.H. Reeves, St. George, S.C.: "Our 1998 **Deere** 6 by 4 Gator is our best buy. We've spent only about \$300 on repairs.

"The **Sears** 300-amp electric welder we bought in 1957 still works fine. No problems.

"Our **Sears** 80-amp battery charger is more than 25 years old, and the only repair it ever needed was to a fan motor. This battery charger still works great."

On the minus side, "Everything that could go wrong, did go wrong on my **Deere** 4435 combine. The wheels came off, the elevator housing wore out, and the straw chopper blades came out and cut a hole into the sheet metal on back of the combine. The front wheel housing doesn't line up with the transmission shaft, and electric switches controlling the hydraulics don't work. This machine was made in Germany so some of the bolts

He Likes Michelin Ag Tires

Steve Fox, Fox Farm, Corning, Arkansas, recently told **FARM SHOW** that he's been using Michelin "Agribib" XM28 radials to harvest for two years.

He thinks no other tires even come close in tough conditions thanks to the larger footprint flexible sidewalls on the Michelin Agribibs. He says they give him more stability and flotation in muddy fields. "Since I switched to Michelin, I'd estimate I reduced my soil damage by 50 percent, which means better yield. I also have less downtime from flats and being stuck."

Fox says if a combine with Michelin radials does get stuck, it doesn't sink as deep into the mud as one with regular rice and cane tires. That means he can pull out the stuck combine with only one tractor, rather than the two it generally took him before to free a combine with rice and cane tires.

"The Michelin sidewalls flex enough so that when mud gets on them, it falls right off," he adds. "With other brands, mud just balls up on the tires.

"I would recommend Michelin Ag radials



Steve Fox likes the Michelin "Agribib" and XM28 radial tires he's been using on his combines for the past two years.

to all farmers, regardless of crop," he says. Contact: **FARM SHOW** Followup, Steve Fox, Fox Farm, 3280 Highway 135, Corning, Ark. 72422 (ph 870 259-3557).