

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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power. I did have to replace the Trac bar on the front axle and have the driver door adjusted to eliminate wind noise. I really like this pickup's stance and ride."

Jerry Deml, Clearfield, Penn.: "My 2001 Deere 250 skid steer loader is my worst buy. It has less than 600 hours on it, but already I've had to replace five hydraulic hoses inside the machine. The engine was setting on two of the hoses which caused them to blow. The other three hoses were run poorly so they kinked and leaked. There was a factory recall on two items, and I had to wait four months for the dealer to repair them. The dealer and the company did nothing to help, even after three months of phone calls. They left me with 6,000 lbs. of yellow scrap metal. No more Deere products for me."

Duane Crandon, Lyons, N.Y.: "I like my 1980 International Harvester 3788 2-WD tractor. It's extremely versatile, has good traction, and is well balanced."

"My Farmall 1206 is a pleasant tractor to drive. It has a lot of power and is virtually indestructible."

"My New Holland 195 manure spreader is my worst buy. The slats build up with manure in cold weather and don't clear the underside. This manure spreader was designed for the kind of climate they have in Bermuda."

Otto Maas, Potter, Wis.: "My Sears Craftsman titanium-coated drill bits are my worst buy. They come in a metal index box. I paid \$100 for the set, but they're no good at all. After drilling one hole the bits are already dull. The entire set is a piece of junk."

Yosh Konishi, Rosalia, Wash.: "I like PG2000 penetrating lubricant made by Progold Lubricant. We manufacture unfinished pine furniture and cut thousands of board feet of pine. Before we started using this product I had to use a wire brush to regularly clean our equipment. Now I can clean the equipment once and apply this product, without having to reapply it for another two months. It repels sawdust and keeps our equipment looking brand new."

Philip G. Lumley, Wilkesport, Ontario: Philip nominates his 1964 Chevrolet pickup as his "all-time best buy". "I bought this pickup in 1981 from a local farmer for \$650. I had the engine rebuilt for \$1,200 but did my own body work. I've used this pickup every day for more than 25 years, and now it has about 195,000 miles on it. I have to get it appraised every five years for insurance purposes - last year it was worth more than \$5,000."

"I don't like my 2004 DeWalt cut-off saw which my son gave to me as a gift. Every time I try to start it up the breaker trips. I called the company and they sent new brushes but it didn't help. I put in a 20-amp breaker for it but it still kicks off."

Jim Warren, Avondale, Colo.: Jim nominates his 1992 Snapper self-propelled mower equipped with a 5 hp Wisconsin engine as his "best buy". "I've used it to mow my lawn, as well as hundreds of others lawns as a part-time job. The engine finally began to give out so I replaced it with a new walk-behind Deere JS30 mower equipped with a 6 1/2 hp Briggs & Stratton engine."

"I paid a premium price for the Deere mower of \$500, but it's a worst buy. This machine could just barely pull itself along. The mower is supposed to have a variable speed transmission, but I could go at only two speeds - turtle slow or jackrabbit fast, with nothing in between. I contacted the company and was given instructions on how to regulate the speed, but nothing worked. Finally I removed the engine and mounted it on the

old Snapper mower. I'll never buy a Deere mower again."

Len Youngblut, Waterloo, Iowa: Len likes his Canon mp830 printer/fax but says there's one problem. "The machine works great and is easy to use, but the high cost of replacement ink will keep you broke."

He says his 2001 Chevrolet 2500 heavy duty pickup is "the worst lemon imaginable. It had a lot of things go wrong that were turned in under warranty, but GM just ignored them until the mileage exceeded the warranty limit, then claimed the pickup was out of warranty. I finally got a company rep to admit the rings were bad from the factory, which is why it burns a quart of oil every 500 miles. I brought it in at 8,000 miles for this problem."

"Another problem is the front axle won't hold oil. It leaks out of a seam. The factory's solution was to smear some silicone sealer on the bottom outside of the gearcase. The heater core must be leaking, since it smells like anti-freeze in the cab and I've spent hundreds of dollars on the air conditioner. The pickup sometimes quits when I'm just driving slowly and then I can't get it started again. The fuel gauge works only intermittently."

"I've babied this pickup ever since it was new, but it's just a total lemon. I've been a lifelong GM fan, but not any more. From now on it's Japanese only for me, as soon as Toyota makes a 9500 GVW truck."

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T.E. Salsman, Richmond, Ky.: "My 1986 Case Ingersoll 446 garden tractor equipped with an Onan engine is my best buy. It has 4,072 hours on it. Other than some early problems with the transaxle, it has required only routine maintenance. It uses some oil, but you expect that with high engine hours."

"Ingersoll has been sold to another company but is again manufacturing garden tractors, this time with Briggs & Stratton engines. I recently bought three 10.3 hp air-cooled diesel models. I'll probably use one of them to power a hydraulic-powered digger. Or, I may build a backhoe for my new Kubota B7510 tractor. At 81 years old, one has to keep moving or else rust in place."

Richard T. Olsen, Donnelly, Minn.: "There are few companies today that stand behind their products and consider the customer as having any value, but Marvin Windows and Doors of Warroad, Minn., is an exception (ph 800 727-7596; www.Marvin.com). We built a home in 1993 with Marvin Windows and had a small problem recently with some of the windows. I called the company to see what could be done. At first they said the windows were long past warranty, but suggested that I send photos so they could evaluate the problem. Upon reviewing the photos the company took care of us at no charge, to our surprise and to our great satisfaction. I believe they actually value the customer, which is rare to see these days."

"I'd advise anyone who's building or remodeling to consider this company. Not only do they have a great product that's made here in the U.S., but they actually stand behind it. This company has integrity."

Bruce Bird, Tisdale, Sask.: "My Makita cordless drill and my old Makita table saw are both best buys. I bought my little Makita 7 1/4-in. table saw back in 1986 and have

never had a minute of trouble with it. It's made entirely from aluminum and is super light. I can use it to cut green poplar for hours, yet the motor won't even get warm. It is noisy, though."

"My Makita cordless 9.6-volt drill performs great. It's lightweight and runs for a long time on a charge. I've replaced the battery only once in nine years. It has taken a number of falls off scaffolds but just keeps on ticking. I've found that most Makita products treat me pretty good."

Rick O' Mara, Okmulgee, Okla.: "I think some of your readers would be interested in a company called NeuroCare



(www.neurocareinc.com). They produce electrical muscle stimulators. I have MS and am spastic in my legs bilaterally and have neuropathy in both legs. The company's machine has certainly controlled the spasms in my legs. Before using it I could only walk about a quarter of a mile before I had to take a break. Soon after I started using it I was able to walk all day long with my wife at a city-wide garage sale. I had also lost the sight in my right eye due to optic neuritis. But after using this machine, my vision returned."

"I don't promise what happened to me would happen to everyone, but I had nothing to lose. I was at a point where the doctors were just running out of answers for me and nothing was helping. A lot of people suffer from neuropathy because of diseases like diabetes."

Richard Peckens, Fowlerville, Mich.: To increase fuel efficiency, Richard used Motorkote polymer additive on his 1988 Ford F-350 pickup equipped with a 460 cc engine (ph 888 771-5656; www.motorkote.com). He says it's his "best buy". "I put the additive in at 88,000 miles. I had been going through a tank of gas every 135 miles but after adding Motorcote, I was able to go 175 miles. I'm still getting the same results 60,000 miles later. Now I add Motorcote to all my engines and hydraulic systems. I don't sell it. I just like it."

Mahlon J. Sorensen, Hibbing, Minn.: "My 2005 Nor-Trac 20 hp, 4-WD tractor is my best buy. It's well built and cost only about half as much as comparable name brand tractors. I've put 357 hours on it without any repairs. I've cut and raked hay with it and baled 2,478 small square bales. I've also used it with a 4-ft. rototiller, 4-ft. rotary mower, 2-bottom plow, 6-ft. disk harrow, and 3-pt. mounted back scoop. The combination of 4-WD, 12-speed transmission, and 2-speed live pto makes all this work possible. I look forward to many more hours of enjoyable work with this tractor."

"My subscription to FARM SHOW is a best buy. I look forward to each issue and store all my issues in tall stacks. I make a list of the stories I'm particularly interested in and might want to go back to at a later date. That way I don't have to leaf through each page to find what I'm looking for. Thank you for a good magazine. I'll be taking it as long as I live."

Lew Holland, Wildrose, N. Dak.: "My 2003 45-ft. Rite-Way land roller is my worst buy. The frame that connects the rollers broke because it's built too weak. The company won't do anything about it except offer to sell

me a new frame. I've seen other machines like mine with the same problem."

Pete Setcoski, Oscoda, Mich.: "My 1971 Jonserud 16-in. chainsaw is my best buy. I use it to cut oak firewood every year. No problems. It has never been in the shop."

Darin Bartholomous, Grasston, Minn.: "I bought my Poulan 18-in. chainsaw about two years ago. After I used it to cut a few cords of wood, the idling needed to be adjusted a little. But after that, no problems. I've used this saw to cut about 15 cords of wood. It isn't a heavy duty model and I don't consider it a best buy, but it's not a worst buy, either."

Elmer Pinkerton, Elmwood, Neb.: "I got rid of my Grasshopper zero turn mower because the drive wheels dug up the turf whenever I changed directions."

"Now I own a Deere 1420 riding mower equipped with a 60-in. mower. It's both my best and worst buy. I like using this mower on level ground, but not on steep slopes. The unit has too many built-in safety gimmicks that shut down if I squirm on the seat or hit a bump. To solve the problem, I built a 150-lb. counterweight that keeps the mower stable on slopes (see story on page 18). My dealer refuses to disconnect the safety features for liability reasons."



Kenneth Houle, Brook Park, Minn.: "My best buy is the pair of I-C-Mor 8 1/2-in. convex mirrors that I bought for my Gehl 4835 skid loader (I-C-Mor, ph 320 629-6071; www.I-C-Mor.com). I back up as much as I go forward in our barn yard while loading feed, and the calves are always following me around. I had to keep turning back to see behind me and was afraid that I was going to run over a calf. Now with the outside mirrors I have a good field of view."

The mirrors sell for \$60 apiece or \$120 a pair plus S&H.

Roger D. Tarr, Spokane, Wash.: "My 1956 Deere model 40 tractor equipped with a Wagner Iron Works front-end loader is my best buy. I've used it hard for seven years with very few problems. It's the best \$4,400 I've ever spent."

"I paid \$90 for my Ryobi garden cultivator six years ago and it's a best buy. It's powered by a 31cc, 2-cycle motor that operates a 9-in. rotating cutter at 'hang on for dear life' speed. No problems."

Paul Strite, Foxworth, Miss.: "My best buy is a 1990 Ford F-250 club wagon equipped with a 7.3-liter diesel engine. I bought it used 11 years ago with about 109,000 miles on it, and now it has 347,000 miles. It still runs good and the engine has never been touched. It gets 17 to 20 mpg on the highway."

Marvin M. Smith, Hooper, Neb.: "I bought a used 1995 Ford Aspire car in 2000 with 57,000 miles on it. I drive it every day. It now has about 155,000 miles. I've replaced the front brakes and one set of spark plugs. The battery is more than seven years old. It gets 45 to 50 mpg during the summer and never less than 42 mpg during the winter, and doesn't use a drop of oil. I wish they still made this car."

Michael H. Luhman, Howard Lake, Minn.: "My 2006 Black & Decker cordless hedge trimmer is my best buy. It's lightweight