

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

has more than 360 hrs. on it with no problems and still has the original belts.”

John Shue, Palmer, Alaska.: “My 1969 **Deere** 110 garden tractor has worn out two mower decks and two sets of tires. It works better than a Timex watch.”

Joshua Jeppsen, Crawfordsville, Ore.: “I’m well-pleased with my 2001 **Dodge** Quad Cab pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter, 24-valve diesel engine. It has more than 210,000 miles but still has the original fuel injection pump. We use this pickup every day in the woods. I can’t wait to buy another Dodge.”

Kenneth A. Benjamin, North East, Mo.: A 1997 **Cyclone Rake** leaf vac equipped with a Tecumseh 6 hp engine rates as Kenneth’s “best buy” (ph 888 531-7253). “The unit attaches square on back of the mower with two bolts and mounts on caster wheels so it won’t jackknife when I back up. Everything on the unit breaks down, folds up and stores away. When I ordered replacement parts the company was very professional, and the parts were actually better than the original ones.”

Don Wilson, Hunter, Okla.: “I’m disappointed in our 2010 **Kawasaki** Mule utility vehicle. About two months after we bought it the engine started to have problems. It would die and then after 5 min. the engine would start and run a while, but then the same problem would happen again. We took the machine to the dealer, who installed a bunch of new parts and kept it for a month. When we got the rig back, it still had the same problem. We got a big repair bill that should have been covered under the warranty. We plan to get rid of this machine and buy a **Deere** Gator.”

Richard Keeney, Cuyler, N.Y.: “I like my **Kubota** M108S loader tractor equipped with a dual speed transmission. This is a solid tractor, great for our hilly ground, and is fuel-efficient. It’s also easy to get on and off and has good rear visibility.”

Robert Randall, Three Oaks, Mich.: “My **Deere** 301 and 301A industrial tractors are both best buys. These tractors are gas-powered and always start right up. With

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power steering and hydraulic brakes, they drive like high-powered go-carts. They both have loaders on them and I’ve adapted several attachments to the loaders including a digger for small trees, a forklift, and a grapple bucket. My next project is to adapt a hydraulic-powered brush chopper so I can mow without having to twist around and look back all the time. On the down side, I never thought a 3-cyl. engine could burn so much fuel.”

Paul Klingenberg, Parkersburg, Iowa: “We had **Trojan** cup hog waterers for about 20 years, but they were getting pitted and worn down so we replaced them with new Trojan waterers. The new ones didn’t even last a year before they started breaking off. Just getting someone to talk to us was a major hurdle, as they wouldn’t return phone calls and basically just said ‘tough luck’. They did finally replace three waterers, but soon after that another waterer broke.”

Paul Jenkins, Litchfield, Ill.: “My 10-year-old Ford F-250 Super-Duty service truck has only left me sitting by the side of the road two times in 500,000 miles,” says Paul Jenkins of Litchfield, Ill. “The company asked me if I wanted to replace it several times over the years, but I told them no.”

Jenkins drives the vehicle every week through parts of five states as a manufacturer’s service representative for Square D Schneider Electric. The 7.3L diesel engine runs well under all conditions, even when pulling a



10,000-lb., 16-ft. trailer. It gets 18 to 20 mpg in normal driving and 10 to 12 mpg when pulling the trailer.

“This truck has been a real workhorse from the first day I drove it,” Jenkins says. “It’s still got the original engine and drive train. It’s always had regular maintenance, including lubrication, tires, ball joints, battery and brakes. It still starts easy and runs well.” He credits the expert service from PJ’s Tire and Auto in Carlinville, Ill., with keeping it in top running condition.

Jenkins has only had a couple problems. “Once the air conditioner seized and tore up the belts, so it overheated and had to be towed. Another time the high pressure oil pump went out and the engine stalled. Those were both minor repairs and I was back on the road again quickly.”

Jenkins had nearly 400,000 miles on the truck when the company issued him the 16-ft. trailer for some service jobs. “We didn’t know if the transmission would handle a 5-ton load after so many miles, but I’ve pulled that rig without a problem.”

Stuart Louderback, Toledo, Wash.: “I’ve been using **Aero Kroil** spray lubricant for many years (ph 800 311-3374; www.KanoLaboratories.com). I’m a commercial chicken farmer, and the environment in a chicken barn is corrosive. I have winches and pulleys in the ceiling of each of my barns that need lubricant on a regular basis. Aero Kroil is highly pressurized so I can lube the winches and pulleys from the floor without having to use a ladder. Its lubrication qualities hold up well.”

Tom Winter, Manhattan, Kan.: “I bought my 1990 **Ford** Festiva used in 2000 and it now has more than 220,000 miles on it while requiring few repairs. This small 4-cyl. car gets more than 40 mpg and still drives like new.”

Marion Sadler, Livonia, Mo.: “I bought my 1980 **Dodge** D150 4-WD pickup used in 1990 with about 45,000 miles, and I drove it until 2010 with no problems.

“I bought my 2004 **Ford** F-350 4-WD pickup used with about 58,000 miles. The 4-WD never seems to work when there’s snow or wet weather. The pickup runs good otherwise but the 4-WD is a big problem. It now has about 118,000 miles on it.”

Mark Beachy, Sugar Creek, Ohio: “My **Snapper** Pro 48-in. walk-behind hydrostatic lawn mower is built heavy and is easy to operate. We use it to mow our 3-acre pasture. If I let the machine go it drives in a straight line, and by using a hand crank I can easily adjust the cutting height from 2 1/2 to 6 in. The mower deck is open underneath which lets me mow 3-ft. tall grass with ease. I’d recommend this mower to anyone.”

Leonard Maiani, Athol, Idaho: Leonard nominates his 2011 **DR** tow-behind leaf and lawn vacuum as his “worst buy”. “The trip mechanism to dump the load was an immediate problem – it wouldn’t hold and tore ruts in our lawn. After a failed attempt to repair it, the dealer said it was the best he

could do. The company sent me new parts. Then the unit quit working when a pine cone got stuck behind the fan. Once that got dealt with the Briggs & Stratton engine quit working halfway through the second tank of gas.”

Lawrence Wiles, Fountain Inn, S.C.: “It’s a good pickup for our family,” says Lawrence about his 2012 **Dodge** Ram 1500 pickup equipped with a 5.7-liter Hemi engine. “My wife enjoys this pickup as she can lay her seat back and sleep on trips. It gets decent mileage and handles well in all weather.”

Dennis Holbrook, New Plymouth, Idaho: Dennis is the satisfied owner of a 2010 **Honda** Rancher 2-WD ATV. “It starts every time, is easy on fuel and has a lot of power. It also has excellent ergonomics. I use this machine every day for checking on our irrigation system and for doing farm chores.”

Arthur W. Little, Bonifay, Fla.: Arthur’s impressed with his **Rolls Rite** 35-ft. gooseneck trailer (ph 888 357-7655; www.rollrite.com). “This trailer has torsion tubes to prevent twisting, is reasonably priced, and the company’s service is second to none. If you buy from Rolls Rite and have a problem, they’ll fix it. The company is family-owned and they’ll build a trailer just the way you want it.”

Larry Owen, Pochontas, Ark.: “I’m satisfied with my 2009 **Sears Craftsman** 19.2-volt cordless 3/8-in. drill-driver. I’ve used this tool in numerous situations, using most of the torque settings and speed variations, and it performs well at every setting. I especially like the balance and grip of this tool. The company increased the power and adjustability of this tool but it didn’t result in a larger drill – in fact, it’s smaller than some previous models.”

Joe Walden, Greencastle, Ind.: “I like my 1997 **Ford** F-150 XLT pickup equipped with a 4.6-liter engine and automatic transmission. I put about 300,000 miles on it with no problems, except that at 210,000 miles the alternator went out. I always changed the oil every 3,000 miles. When I traded it off after 10 years, it still had the original battery in it.”

Robert Lee Hahn, Jr., McCammon, Idaho: “My 1999 **Chrysler** Town & Country mini van is a reliable, dependable vehicle. It has about 365,000 miles on it, and I’ve only spent about \$4,500 on repairs. The 3.8-liter, V-6 engine has never been worked on. I change the oil and filter every 10,000 miles

and add STP oil treatment to protect against engine wear. I use regular 5-20W oil.”

John Ruff, Logan, Kansas: “I like my 20th Century 3-range 220 AC croc welder equipped with a DC converter box. It was built in the early 1970’s. I’ve used this welder for more than 40 years and only had to replace one bolt and the main on/off switch. The company replaced it for free even though I told them I had bought the welder used. Over the years this welder has seen a lot of use and has always done what I wanted it to. It has required absolutely no service work.”

David Moon, Wachapreague, Va.: “My 2005 **Toyota** Prius has about 180,000 miles on it and consistently gets 48 mpg. My only cost has been for 4 spark plugs, 2 air filters, 2 sets of tires, and a few low cost light bulbs. The brake pads are original. I change the synthetic oil every 10,000 miles. It now uses one quart of oil every 5,000 miles.”

Steve Wilkinson, Ponce De Leon, Fla.: “We bought a used **Deere** Gator to replace a golf cart, and it works so well we wish we had bought it a long time ago. It hauls up to 1,500 lbs. and has a dump box. Gets great gas mileage and always starts. I could have paid for the Gator with the money I spent on batteries over the years for the golf cart.”

Wes Orban, Box Elder, S. Dak.: “I bought my 1985 **Case** 2096 tractor used 5 years ago. It has a comfortable cab with a good view and is the most economical tractor I’ve ever owned. No problems.

“I’m not happy with the 2011 **Battery Minder** SCC015 solar charger I bought from Northern Tool. When the unit arrived it wouldn’t charge, so I returned it to the manufacturer at my expense. After 5 weeks and numerous phone calls I received a replacement. This charger is advertised to charge four 12-volt batteries, but I don’t think it could charge a watch battery.”

Roger Redlin, Pulaski, Wis.: “My **Kubota** 4400 loader tractor is handy and economical to operate. I did have to put fluid in the tires, and I wish the 3-pt. arms were extendable to make it easier to hook up implements. I bought a 3-pt. quick hitch to solve the problem.”

Charlie Card, Prosser, Wash.: “My 2010 **Northern Tool** 24-volt, 1/2-in. drive impact wrench is as handy as a shirt pocket. We use it way more than we ever thought possible. The battery holds its charge so it can do lots of work.”

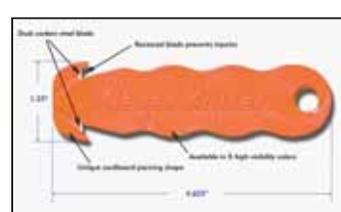
Bob and Toni Burke, Branch, Mich.

They really like their **Klever Innovations** safety cutters (ph 800 218-3068; www.kleverinnovations.net). They’re available in 3 different models; all with a dual hook design and recessed blades that prevent contact with fingers. The dual hook design lasts twice as long as single blade cutters, says the company. Another advantage is the design reduces the chance of damaging goods inside boxes and packages.

The Klever Cutter measures 4 5/8 in. long by 1 1/4 in. wide. The blade is made from high quality carbon steel; stainless steel is available upon request. Available in 5 high visibility colors.

“We operate a sheep farm and have a whole stack of Klever Cutters in our shop. It’s awesome not having to pull out a knife and worry about cutting yourself,” says Toni. “These cutters fit great in a pocket and have a hole at one end, which makes it easy to keep them anywhere you frequently cut or open things. We use them every day to cut binder twine off bales, to cut plastic off pallets and crates, and so forth. They’ll cut through almost anything that’s not steel.”

The company’s Klever Konzept safety



cutter measures 5 3/4 in. long by 1 1/2 in. wide and is equipped with a tape splitter at one end. This model has a larger handle and a larger throat for cutting thicker material, and a carbon steel blade for long life. It also has a slightly larger blade opening for cutting thicker cardboard.

The Klever X-Change model measures 6 1/4 in. long by 1 1/2 in. wide. It has a heavy-duty carbon steel blade and an interchangeable head design, making it easy to replace the blade. A double wall head is also available. The ergonomic “soft touch” handle is designed to reduce hand fatigue and stress. Works great for cutting large plastic box wrapping and for cutting pallet wrapping.

The safety cutters sell for \$2 to \$8 plus S&H, depending on model.