

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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extended warranty at about 87,000 miles. Unfortunately, the replacement engine started having problems at about 38,000 miles."

Gary Stern, Halliday, N. Dak.: "I'm well satisfied with my 2008 **Case IH RBX 563** round baler which is equipped with endless belts, net wrap and a wide pickup. It makes nice bales. We rake two windrows together to make large windrows, and the baler handles them with ease.

"My **Deere 704** pull-type, 14-wheel rake does a nice job of raking but is built too light for rough hay ground. Every year the frame breaks in a different spot and has to be reinforced and welded.

"My **White 272** 35-ft. disk does nice work, but the shafts that the blades are mounted on are only 1 1/8 in. in diameter when they should be at least 1 1/2 in. or more. Last spring I broke eight different shafts."

Jerry Maddock, Defiance, Ohio: "I really like my **Rage Multipurpose Circular Saw** from **Evolution Tools**. The 7 1/4-in.



blade cuts plastic, steel, aluminum and wood with one blade. It's great for working with reclaimed wood. If you hit a nail, it cuts right through it.

"When I brought it home, I put a piece of pipe in my vise and cut right through it. I've used it for cutting metal siding, steel tubes and more.

"It cuts steel smooth without a burr and doesn't even heat it up like other saws do. You can get a diamond blade for it to cut stone, concrete and brick.

"I've got the **Rage Miter Saw** too. It has a 10-in. blade and also cuts steel, aluminum, wood and plastic. It has laser guidance, compound tilt and a slide for long angled cuts. Put a diamond blade in it, and you can cut tile too."

Brian J. Leopold, Bergenfield, N.J.: "I like my 2004 **Cub Cadet 8454** garden tractor equipped with a front-end loader and backhoe. No problems. It always starts right up and cost 40 percent less than other brands."

James Devlin, Almond, N.Y.: "In March 2000 I put a new **NAPA** group 31A battery in my **Bobcat 643** skid loader and it's still going strong today. I hope the next battery lasts as long."

Brad Goetz, Batavia, Ohio: Brad likes the beekeeping equipment he bought from **Dadant & Sons** in Frankfort, Ky. (ph 217 847-3324; www.dadant.com). "The service provided by these folks has been top notch. I'm a 'newbie' at beekeeping, but they answered all my questions and provided excellent recommendations that helped me decide exactly what I needed to get started. All the equipment they sell is made in the U.S., which I consider a big plus."

Terry Hill, Ceresco, Mich.: "We bought a 3-pt. conversion kit from **Saginaw Valley Tractor** for our 1955 **Allis Chalmers WD45** tractor (ph 810 638-5787; www.saginawcountytractor.com). It lets us use standard 3-pt. equipment on the tractor. It's well made, economical and works great."

Andy Williamson, Lucedale, Miss.: "It's by far the best work truck I've ever owned," says Andy, pleased with his 2007 **Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD 2-WD** pickup equipped with a 6.0-liter engine and automatic

transmission. "This pickup is just the right size for a small farm. The 6.0-liter engine has enough power to handle a 35-ft. gooseneck flatbed trailer loaded with eighteen 6 by 6-ft. round hay bales, or a 32-ft. gooseneck cattle trailer loaded with cows.

"The original engine blew up at about 88,000 miles, and the replacement one at about 110,000 miles."

"I'm disappointed with my 2000 **Ford F-150** pickup equipped with a **Triton V-8** engine. The original engine blew up at about 88,000 miles, and the replacement one at about 110,000 miles. The third engine worked fine until I sold the pickup. Another problem was with the **Coil Pack** ignition coils. If they got wet, most of the time they'd go out and that started happening once or twice a week. The ignition coils cost about \$55 apiece to replace, not including labor."

Ricky L. Kirkpatrick, Cottontown, Tenn.: "My **New Holland 7320** discbine pulls easy and does an excellent job in rank hay. The hay dries down well, and cattle really love the feed."

Gordon Kulzer, Osceola, Wis.: "My **Ruger 1022 .22** caliber rifle equipped with a stainless steel barrel is dependable and accurate. I use a 3-9 power scope on it. Best of all, this rifle is fun to shoot and relatively inexpensive."

Wendy Wellnitz, Lanesboro, Minn.: "I eat oatmeal five days a week, and since we bought a hand-cranked oat flaker, it tastes better than ever. I think it's creamier and has



a better taste. With the **FlicFloc** hand flaker from **Komo**, I can roll out about a third of a cup of oats in a minute.

"The flaker weighs 4 1/4 lbs., is about 7 in. high and has a beech plywood frame. It clamps quickly into place. The tapered stainless steel rollers spin the flakes into a 4-oz. glass that fits underneath the rollers in front of the flaker.

"Although we've only used it for oats it's supposed to work on all types of grain (except for corn), oil seeds and herbs.

"At \$170 it's not cheap, but it's so well-built I expect it will last a lifetime. (ph 800 321-1073; www.pleasanthillgrain.com)"

Lowell LyGrisse, Towanda, Kan.: "The first tractor I ever drove was in the 1930's - a **Deere Model D** equipped with steel wheels. At the time I wasn't even 10 years old. Later in life I bought three **Deere 4020** tractors and turbocharged one of them to 118 hp. It's still running with 12,500 hours on it and has had no major repairs."

John Behrens, Center Point, Iowa: John's had good luck with his 2010 **Stihl MS 441** chainsaw. "I cut a lot of firewood and wanted a good size saw to cut not only logs but also tree limbs. This saw starts good and has a lot of power."

Calvin Grobe, Oakland, Iowa: "My 1999 **Dodge 1500** pickup has more than 187,000 miles on it but is still running strong. I've



Jim Ruen, Lanesboro Minn.: "The **Silky Hayauchi** telescoping pole saw works great around my yard and woods. With more than 10,000 oak, black walnut, pine, spruce, ash and saplings on my farm, I have a lot of pruning to do.

"I've only used the **Silky** for one season, but I'm sold on the simple but effective design. I can see why the company can claim it's the best-selling pole saw in the world. The pole allows multiple length options, but clamps tight for use.

"Even stretched out to its full 16-ft. length, the hooks on both ends of the blade keep it in place over the branch or vine to be cut. Both hooks are sharp sickles that slice through bark to reduce hangs and tears as the branch is sawn through.

"The rear-angled teeth let you use gravity for the cutting stroke. The razor sharp teeth cut through a 2 to 3-in. dia. pine branch in 10 to 12 strokes. Hardwood branches take longer. (ph 866-345-2468; www.silkysaws.com.)"



Sharp hooks on both ends of blade keep it in place over the branch or vine to be cut.

replaced only the front steering system."

On the negative side, "I've spent a lot of money for repairs to my 2001 **Chevrolet Duramax** diesel pickup, which has about 176,000 miles on it. It has needed new fuel injectors, a new fuel injector pump, an Allison transmission transfer case, ABS brakes, and a main computer totaling about \$17,000."

David Windhorst, Portersville, Penn.: "My 1982 **Deere 950 4-WD** loader tractor has required only routine maintenance. I've used it to move manure, dirt and snow, to bush hog, plant corn, and to do other chores. It has about 3,000 hours on it. The one problem has been with the **Firestone Z16** tires on front. They came with only 2-ply sidewalls, and the first year both tires got bruised when they hit tree stumps. I replaced them with 5.60-16 truck tires with 6-ply sidewalls. Those tires have worked well but will need to be replaced soon."

William C. Scheider, Freeport, Ill.: "My 2011 **Polaris Ranger 500 E.F.I.** 4-wheeler always starts right up and rides smooth over the roughest ground. It has great power and is equipped with on-demand 4-WD which we've only used a couple of times. My wife loves this machine. I added a seat on back so now four people can ride on it."

Marty Graham, Peck, Mich.: "This tractor is worth its weight in gold," says Marty about his 2003 **WheelHorse 312-8** garden tractor. "I use it to till and work up small gardens for people with limited yard space. It can get into tight places where a compact tractor can't go. I use it with a snow cab, 48-in. blade, 48-in. rototiller, single bottom plow, V-ditcher, and a harrow. I haven't spent a dime on repairs other than for routine maintenance. It's a rock-solid little tractor."

Tiede Farms, Britton, Mich.: "I'm happy with the **IH 7130** front wheel assist tractor I bought used two years ago. I also like my 1953 **IH Super M** tractor which I bought new. I've owned IH tractors ever since I started

farming and have been happy with all of them."

Al Ehresmann, Jefferson, S. Dak.: "It has never failed me in any way," says Al about his 2007 **Ariens** zero turn riding mower. "It cuts evenly, which I really like. I highly recommend this mower to anyone."

Gene Funk, Elkville, Ill.: "My 2012 **Polaris Ranger** electric 4-wheeler runs quiet, is fuel efficient and has adequate speed."

Robert Thomas II, Oak Grove, Mo.: "I like my **Harbor Freight 1/2-in.** drive Earthquake impact wrench. The quality and torque is equal to impact wrenches that cost twice as much. I paid \$71.20 for it with a 20 percent off coupon. I've used this impact wrench to change tires on trailers and tractors, and it easily loosens the most stubborn bolts.

"I bought my **NumMax 21** degree framing nailer at Home Depot to finish my basement. It's lightweight and works well, and it was priced at only \$89.99. I had to order this tool online but it came with free shipping. Excellent quality and no jams. It's built rugged and shoots a variety of different nails so I can meet all building codes."

John Martin, La Crescent, Minn.: "I like my 2004 **Dodge 3500** pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and 6-speed manual transmission. It has a trouble-free engine, rides good and is fuel efficient. I've put about 130,000 miles on it so far and am looking forward to many more years of good service."

Ed Fewell, Standard, Ill.: "Last year my **Stihl FS** weed eater quit working after 18 years of use. The only parts I ever replaced on it were an air filter and a spark plug. What's more, when I recently bought a similar new model from the company the price had only gone up by less than \$20.

"I bought my 2005 **Toyota Scion XA** car used in 2007 with about 38,000 miles, and now it has about 90,000 miles. The only repairs have been for a new wheel bearing at a cost of less than \$300, and a new battery."