

tell you that most of the folks who say they babyed something, did not. Then they show up 5 years after the warranty has expired and want the manufacturer to rebuild the vehicle from the ground up, and give them free gas for the next 5 years to boot.

"Two good examples from personal experience come to mind. One involved a Chevy LUV pickup equipped with a diesel engine, which had been driven into a pond resulting in a blown engine. It took us three weeks to get the owner to admit the vehicle had been abused, yet he still wanted GM to give him a new engine.

"In another case, a logger ran a 4-WD truck over a tree stump and wanted the transfer case replaced under warranty – two years after the warranty had expired. A company can't afford to fix everything for free forever, nor should it be expected to do so. I think this is one of the main reasons a lot of companies

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have folded up in recent years. Any time a company doesn't fix the squeak in a 20-year-old machine, the owner gets a lawyer and files a lawsuit. The problem is so bad for many companies that they just fold up and send out form letters that say they won't admit fault but will fix the machine for free. Never mind that it's going to cost the company a small fortune to fix machinery that should've been recycled years ago.

"This problem is the biggest reason I went back to school and learned another trade. I now work on repairing copiers, and thankfully they have a lot less of this type of headache."

**Gilbert Breeding, Finksburg, Md.:** "My worst buy is my Harman T300 wood stove. The first problem was a faulty top door gasket, which I replaced. Then the andirons rotted out which made them look like the back of an old manure spreader. The company replaced the andirons under warranty. Also, the ash door warped and wouldn't close properly; the damper assembly quit working; and the heat shelf warped and dropped down to the top of the glass door. All these problems happened in the first two years. The stove came with a 3-year warranty.

"I'm a retired forest ranger and have heated my home with wood for more than 60 years. Also, I've used wood stoves to heat ranger stations, maintenance shops, and so forth so I feel I know how to use a wood stove. I think the stove was probably made from inferior metal, but the company says the stove was over-fired. They made that decision looking at photos alone, without anyone ever actually seeing the stove.

"In my opinion, the company's warranty is useless. The dealer did try his best on my behalf. But I'll never buy a Harman stove again, or recommend one to anyone."

**Brad Goetz, Batavia, Ohio:** "It's the best pickup I've ever owned," says Brad about his 1996 Ford F-250 4-WD model equipped with a 460 cu. in. gas engine and automatic transmission. "This pickup consistently gets 12 mpg, but it'll haul anything I need anywhere I want.

"My Harbor Freight infrared driveway motion sensor works only sporadically, with about 3/4 of all alarms being 'false positives'. I should've known anything marked 'clearance' at Harbor Freight wasn't going to be up to snuff."

**Vince Meinecke, Trenton, Mo.:** "My worst buy is Walt's Wholesale Clothing Co., which was written up recently in FARM SHOW. I ordered two pairs of jeans and waited in vain for their arrival. After 11 days I called the company and they assured me the jeans would be shipped the next day and arrive at my residence in four days. But four days later, no jeans. I waited three more days and called the company again, and was assured the jeans would be shipped the next day. Then about a week later I received an email that the jeans were back ordered. I called and cancelled the order. However, when I received my next credit card statement I discovered I had been charged for the jeans I never received. How this company has stayed in business since 1968 is beyond me."

**Walter C. Black, Salem, New Mexico:** "I read in a recent issue of FARM SHOW about the trouble Gunhild Vetter had with his Harbor Freight greenhouse. I had the same problem and solved it by securing each panel with large washers and metal screws to the cross braces.

"After trying to start up a new Sears garden rototiller for half a day I finally replaced the Champion spark plug on it with a Delco, and after that the machine always started on the first pull. My lady friend had two hard starting small rototillers and we had the same results after replacing the Champion spark plugs. Now whenever I buy new equipment with Champion spark plugs I replace them right away."

**Carol Gordon, Chisholm, Minn.:** Carol likes her Italian-made, 2010 Benelli ultralight 12-gauge shotgun. "I'm a 5-ft. 3-in. woman who's nearly 70 years old. This shotgun is well worth the money. The gun is a joy to carry while pheasant hunting. Even after hours of walking through fields or along fence rows, it's easy to shoulder. It's also a pleasure to use as a trap gun."

**Steve Fuller, Clintonville, Wis.:** A New Holland TZ22DA compact tractor rates as Steve's "worst buy". "The hydraulic oil filter is located where it accidentally gets hit a lot so it starts to leak oil. There should be a guard on it."

**Lonnie D. Fretz, Troy, Penn.:** Lonnie's had success with his Drill Doctor drill bit sharpener. "I've used it to sharpen 120 drill bits in just 4 hrs. It's perfectly centered and extremely sharp and works great for sharpening broken bits, as well as split points and carbides. It was well worth the \$110 I paid for it."

**Reuben H. Plank, Lovington, Ill.:** "Several years ago I bought a 1970's International 574 tractor, and last fall I bought another one. It's a well-built, heavy-duty tractor that's handy around the farm."

**Harley Yoder, Roodhouse, Ill.:** "My Leatherman Multi-tool is an indispensable tool that has all the bits and blades I need without extra clutter. My son received this tool from an estate, and the tool was broken and had missing parts. He sent the tool to the company along with a letter explaining the situation. They promptly sent him a new Multi-tool, free of charge, that had more features than the old one."

**Ralph Meyer, Oregon City, Ore.:** "I bought a 1999 Ford F-250 4-WD pickup used with about 140,000 miles on it. Today it has more than 240,000 miles and is still going strong. It's a pleasure to drive, equipped with a 7.3-liter Powerstroke diesel engine and 6-speed manual transmission. Plenty of power to pull a 24-ft. gooseneck livestock trailer. It gets 16 mpg.

"My 2006 Claas 250 RC round baler uses 17 rollers to make the bale, and all the baler's chain-driven sprockets are secured to the rollers with gib keys. It's a good baler for



Michael Zimmerman modified his 1981 Caterpillar D5BSA crawler tractor to power pto-operated equipment, such as this 3-row silage chopper.

## "Best Buy" Cat Handles Pto-Operated Equipment

Michael Zimmerman, Zimmerman Tractor, Versailles, Mo., is pleased with his 1981 Caterpillar D5BSA crawler tractor which he modified to power pto-operated equipment.

"We bought this crawler used and replaced the undercarriage with all new parts. We also installed a 540 and 1,000 rpm pto off a White 2-150 wheeled tractor so we can use the crawler on pto-operated equipment.

"In addition, we replaced the crawler's original fuel injection pump with an Interim Scroll fuel-injected pump and added a bigger manifold and turbocharger off a Challenger 65 crawler, which boosted the

horsepower from 165 to 200.

"This crawler works nice to operate a 3-row silage chopper in wet fields. It has a 6-speed transmission and hydraulic steering, which handles real nice. It'll outperform any 4-WD tractor doing tillage work on less fuel, less soil compaction and very little slippage. It also rides nicer in the field than wheeled tractors do. We have two of these crawlers on our farm and are well pleased with them."

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Michael Zimmerman, Zimmerman Tractor, 13874 Hwy. 5, Versailles, Mo. 65084 (ph 573 378-7210).

making high moisture haylage, but several of the rollers failed after the gib keys fell out and the sprockets free-wheeled on the shafts, destroying 4 of them. Everything was behind shields so there was no evidence anything was wrong until the shafts broke off and the rollers stopped turning. The company said they had never seen this problem before. Of course, it happened just after the warranty expired.

"We took the four rollers with damaged shafts to a local machine shop which replaced the shafts. The sprockets were also replaced with new centers using taper-lock hubs. It's a much better system than Claas's gib key setup.

"The baler requires a tractor with a minimum of 90 hp. Our baler came equipped with a pto driveline rated at 60 hp and 540 rpm's, and it failed after just two years. The dealer replaced the driveline at his expense even though the machine was out of warranty."

**Eldon Oyen, 2387 Birchwood Dr., Dubuque, Iowa 52002 (ph 563 583-3671):** "I have a Deere garden tractor with a front-mounted blade that I use to clear snow off our driveway. I didn't like the 1-in. wide shoes on

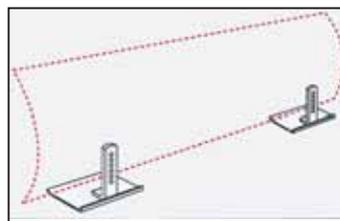
back of the blade. They're too narrow to keep the blade from sinking into wet ground. So I decided to make my own skid plates. They use the same mounting pins and mounting holes and will keep the blade rigid and at a consistent height so you don't tear up lawns or dig too deep into the gravel.

"The skid plates measure 7 in. wide by 4 in. deep. The blade sets on top of the skid plates, which extend about 1/2 in. ahead of the blade. The blade's height above the ground can be adjusted by changing the position of a pin. There's a curled edge on front and back of the skid plates to keep them from catching on anything. To remove the skid plates from the blade you just pull a pair of pins, which can be stored upside down on back of the blade. They sell for \$39 per pair plus S&H."

**Oran Rodgers, Yellville, Ark.:** Oran's disappointed with his Black & Decker table saw. "The brushes in the saw's motor wore out, and I couldn't find new brushes anywhere. As a result I had to throw the saw in the trash. I've owned several Black & Decker battery-powered tools, but none of them have lasted long."

**Doris Dodd, Shelbina, Mo.:** "In 1994 I bought a used Snapper L16 riding mower and have used it to mow one to two acres every year. It still has the original engine. All I've replaced is a set of blades, a bolt and the battery."

**Maurice Helmka III, Hallsville, Mo.:** "My best buy is my 2003 Dodge 2500 4-WD Quad Cab pickup equipped with a Cummins turbocharged diesel engine and 6-speed



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