

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

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Jim Niemann, Litchfield, Ill.: “Our 2005 **Great Plains** 40-ft. wide twin row planter works great. We use it to plant all our corn and most of our soybeans in twin rows spaced 8 in. apart on 30-in. centers. It plants 16 double rows and has a total of 32 planting units.

“We were the first farmers in our area to try this planter before it went on the market. When the company made 60 planters in their first full year of production, we bought one. The planter drops corn seed so accurately that the off-setting plants form diagonal patterns across the field. It attracts a lot of attention from passersby.

“We’ve conducted many population trials, using half the planter on twin rows and the

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

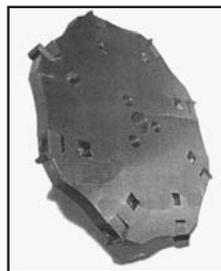
OPINION

Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy
Send your nominations to:
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other half on single 30-in. rows, at many different populations. We’ve found the higher the twin row population, the greater the yield increase.

“To harvest twin row corn we use a 2010 **Drago** 8-row head, which is also a best buy.”

Daniel D. Miller, 52915 Batesville Rd., Quaker City, Ohio 43773: Daniel sells the **Indexable Mudsaw Blade**, which is designed for sawmills. It comes with 5/8-in. wide carbide inserts with 4 sharp edges. By loosening some wedge blocks, you can turn each carbide insert to a sharp side without



having to remove the blade from the mill. According to the company the design keeps the blades sharp for a longer period of time; they remove frozen mud off logs faster in winter; and maintenance costs are lower.

The blade comes with a universal 3-bolt mount and a 3/4-in. dia. center mounting hole. Carbide and spare parts are available.

“This saw performs well,” says Miller. “A friend builds them for me and I sell them in my shop. I use them on my own sawmill and have installed many units for customers, who are all happy with them. They work especially well on sawmills where spring tension is used to hold the saw against the log, because the blade requires very little pressure and not a lot of horsepower.”

Carl from Avon, Conn.: “I really like my 2011 **Sears Craftsman** 4 hp, 18-in. electric chainsaw, which I bought just 6 months ago. It weighs 14 lbs. and is the most powerful electric chainsaw sold by Sears. I replaced the original chain with a **PowerSharp** self-sharpening chain (ph 800 223-5168; www.powersharp.com), which I bought at a local Sears hardware store.

“The biggest advantage for an electric chainsaw compared to gas models is you don’t have to restart the saw time after time when working on a big project. There are no cold or warm engine problems to deal with. Just pull the trigger and away you go. The saw has a 15-amp power draw so it does draw quite a bit of current.

“I highly recommend this saw for small to medium projects near the house. I use it to cut firewood. It’ll slice up 3-ft. dia. trees with no problems. I’ve had electric chainsaws before, but most were 2 hp models. My 4 hp model has a lot more power, and not much can stop it.

“The saw is equipped with a tool-less chain adjustment that makes it easy to change the tension or re-attach the chain if it comes off, which doesn’t happen often. There are no tightening screws at all.

“I paid \$100 for my chainsaw and liked it so much that I bought a second unit.”

Jim Lyboldt, Bernhards Bay, N.Y.: “My 2007 **Kubota** 520 payloader has more than 1,000 hours on it with no problems. I use it with quick-tach implements including a loader bucket, auger, and snowblower.

“My 2008 **Dodge Ram** 3/4-ton 4-WD pickup has had many problems. The transmission leaks and the pickup went back to the dealer twice for that but still didn’t get fixed. I finally traded it for a Chevy.”

Mark L. Ballard, Royse City, Texas: “My **Kubota** G1800 riding mower equipped with a diesel engine always starts. It has a heavy mowing deck and a smooth hydrostatic transmission, and it doesn’t bog down in high grass. It has an impressive design.

“My **Stihl** 390 chainsaw has a lot of power and starts well. No problems.”

Ronald Adams, Louisville, Miss.: “I recently bought a used **Farmtrac** 2098 DT360 4-WD tractor with 205 hours. It performs great and doesn’t burn much fuel no matter what I do.

“My 2006 **Mercury** Marque was only 4 years old, with about 40,000 miles on it, when the paint started to blister and come off. However, the company wouldn’t help because the warranty had expired.”

Samuel B. Shirk, Penn Yan, N.Y.: “My **Leatherman** multi-tool is the most-used tool I own and is built more rugged than cheaper imitations. It’ll take some abuse, although it’s not indestructible.

“**Harbor Freight** tools may be okay for light tinkering, but they’re definitely not meant for serious repair work.”

Merle Erickson, Couderay, Wis.: “My worst buy is my 10 by 12-ft. **Arlington** metal storage building made by Arrow Group Industries and sold by Menards. My wife and I put this building together in October 2010. However, when we had our first good snowfall the roof collapsed completely. The side walls buckled outward, destroying the building and damaging lawn furniture and a lawn tractor stored inside. No one would honor my claim.”

Al Finnbogason, Mission, B.C.: “Over the years I’ve owned almost 20 different **Chevrolet** or **GM** pickups, mostly K5 Blazers, which I consider the best all-around pickup ever built. None of my pickups has ever let me down.”

Ronald E. Friedrich, Kenyon, Minn.: Ronald likes his **Deere** RX73 9 hp riding mower, which he bought used 8 years ago. “I needed a cheap mower for a building site