

**Wendy Wellnitz, Lanesboro, Minn.:** "We found the **CobraHead** weeder at a farm show (ph 608 423-9119; [www.cobrahead.com](http://www.cobrahead.com)). It turned out to be the best weeding tool I've ever used. The design is based on an old push cultivator tine, but modified with a diamond shape steel tip.

"When you set the tip behind a weed or weed clump and pull on the handle, the tip slips into the soil and under the root mass with hardly any pressure. Pull up a little, and the weed clump pops out.



"It works great for breaking up soil clumps and loosening the soil before transplanting, too. It's like a mini-plow, but works great with a chopping action as well. If you can't find it at a store, you can order it online at [www.cobrahead.com](http://www.cobrahead.com). It's not cheap at \$24.95 but it's worth it."

**Emil E. Smith, Franklin, Wis.:** "My **Milwaukee** 7 1/2-in. circular saw is quiet and powerful. I've used it to build a cabin and also have done a lot of roofing work with it. It has so much power I can hardly slow it down. Before I bought it I used a Skil circular saw, which was so loud I had to use ear muffs. Also, it didn't have nearly as much power. This saw can rip through an old plank like nothing. All my shop tools are made by Milwaukee."

**Lawrence Ward, Midland, Mich.:** "My 18-year-old **Charmaster** wood/oil combination furnace is my best buy (ph 218 326-6786; [www.Charmaster.com](http://www.Charmaster.com)). This furnace burns either wood, oil or pellets. It has kept my 100-year-old farm house warm through some nasty Michigan winters."

**Larry Moore, Westminster, Md.:** "My 2003 **Exmark** Laser Z zero turn riding mower has about 450 hours on it with no problems."

**Jeffery Goss, Jr., Springfield, Mo.:** "I like **Nitron** fertilizer. It's natural, non-synthetic, and priced economically."

A 2007 electric-operated **Weed Eater** rates as Jeffery's "worst buy". "This machine caused trouble from the beginning. The machine kept losing its head and had to be re-threaded. It also used up a lot of line, and sometimes it would chew up the line for no apparent reason. Within a week we took it back for a refund."

**Mike McCullough, Missoula, Montana:** "It works perfect for my small horse boarding operation," says Mike, happy with his 2002 **Kubota** L3410 4WD tractor equipped with an HST 35 hp, 3-cyl. diesel engine. "I've put more than 900 hours on it with almost no problems. I use it with a front-end loader with a quick-tach, 9-ft. backhoe equipped with subframe, rock rake, grader spreader, hydraulic-operated post pounder, scraper blade and more. All these units can be mounted either on the tractor's 3-pt. or loader. This tractor is always ready to take on the toughest jobs. I have my dealer service it on a 100-hour schedule, and I change the oil and filter on a 50-hour schedule. I grease the joints every 10 to 15 hours of operation."

**Bill Gregor, Lawton, Mich.:** "My 1948 **Farmall** Cub tractor is a best buy. During the winter I use it almost every day in the woods, pushing snow while using chains on the tires. I also use it to cut hay. I put a new clutch in it about 30 years ago, but the en-

gine has never been overhauled."

**Robert Strommen, New England, N. Dak.:** "My best buy is an **IH** Farmall 560 tractor equipped with an F-11 front-end loader. My dad bought it new in 1958. The first six years this tractor was used for field work. Since then it has been used primarily for loader work, cleaning barns, and moving snow. We use it every day during winter to feed livestock, and it has always been a good starting, reliable tractor. I wish it was new again."

**Cliff Wendricks, Keyser, W. Va.:** "My 2007 **Mantis** rototiller has exceeded my expectations. The ground where I set up my garden was rocky but this little tiller was able to work through it. One of the teeth broke but the company covered it under warranty. I had a new part in about 1 1/2 weeks."

**David Stromberger, Windsor, Colo.:** "In 2005 I traded in two, tried and true IH tractors for a new 2004 **Case IH** MXM 130. It developed electrical problems at 80 hours and always had trouble starting. So I traded for a new 2006 MXM 130 model. It made it to 160 hours before it developed the same electrical problems. Both tractors were equipped with semi powershift transmissions. I'd put the tractor in gear and sometimes it would move, and other times it would flash an error code and refuse to move. The dealer put 50 hours into diagnosing the problem. He finally got it fixed but couldn't say for sure what the problem was. So I got rid of that tractor, too."

**Ned Edelen, Bryantown, Md.:** "It's the best car I've ever owned," says Ned about his 1998 **Ford** Escort LX equipped with a 2-liter engine and 5-speed manual transmission. "This car has more than 386,000 miles and consistently gets 40 mpg. The tires on it have averaged 115,000 miles. The water pump lasted 375,000 miles. It still has the original

**"The car has more than 386,000 miles and consistently gets 40 mpg."**

clutch and exhaust system. There's no body rust and only minor dents from hitting two deer, one of which was a 6-point buck that flipped onto the roof. The only parts that have failed were the harmonic balancer and the alternator. I change the oil at 8,000-mile intervals. I expect this car to make it to 500,000 miles."

**Robert Szabo, Westland, Mich.:** "I bought **Zoller** pumps to use in a small fish pond. The box the pump comes in says it's okay to operate the pump for 4,000 continuous hours, but when I got the pumps home and took them out of the box, the instructions said 'don't use continuously'. These pumps don't last and are unrepairable. The company wouldn't help."

**Paul Rairdon, Clearbrook, Minn.:** Last fall Paul bought a used **Bellsaw** M-14 circular sawmill made in the early 1990's and mounted it on a 40-ft. schoolbus frame. An Allis Chalmers WC tractor supplies the power. "It easily handles 16-ft. logs. Not bad for the \$1,200 I paid for it."

"The **General Electric** automatic coffee maker I bought at Wal-Mart was an expensive, programmable unit that lasted only two months. For some reason this unit had to be delimed with white vinegar every two to four days just to keep it working."

**Greg Reif, Claflin, Kansas:** "My 2008 **Miller** Trailblazer portable welder-generator has far exceeded my expectations. I use it in my welding business where I build custom

## "Crate Tractor" Purchase Goes Sour

After reading our article in the 2008 Best of FARM SHOW on "Low Cost Crate Tractors" from the Tractor Connection, Albany, Oregon, reader David Young from Flower Mound, Texas, ordered one of the imported put-it-together-yourself tractors and sent in a check for \$9,100. He never received the tractor and was recently told the company is out of business and he's out the money.

"I called them repeatedly and they told me all kinds of stories, saying there was a delay in shipping, it would be here soon, and so on. Now I got a letter saying that at the time I ordered my tractor, July 31, 2008, the company was already in trouble. They say they have 18 unfulfilled orders for which they ac-

cepted \$242,044 in prepayments.

"In my opinion, any money received as payment for a tractor to be delivered should have gone into escrow. Apparently the company used the money to pay salaries and other expenses so they had no money to pay for importing the tractors they promised to customers. The final word is that the company is being liquidated and no attempt will be made to reimburse those of us who put money up in good faith."

When FARM SHOW got in touch with John and Linda Nelson at Tractor Connection, we were told they could not discuss the situation and referred us to their lawyers.

cattle facilities and make repairs to farm equipment. This welder-generator has an infinite heat range adjustment so I can use it to do all types of stick welding. It's the only machine I know of with two generators - one for welding and one for powering grinders and other tools. I use it every day. It'll run about 16 hours on 12 gallons of gas. I've owned three other portable welder-generators, but this one is by far the best."

**Jason Lyon, Roblin, Manitoba:** "It's a nimble little tractor that has surprised me many times with its performance," says Jason about his 2007 **Deere** 2320 4-WD compact tractor. "It's powered by a 24 hp, 3-cyl. Yanmar diesel engine, which has plenty of torque and is easy on fuel. The 4-WD is easy to engage and has gotten me out of more jams than I can remember, especially when I'm using my 3-pt. mounted snowblower. I use it with a 62-in. drive-over mower deck, which is easy to install and does a flawless job of mowing grass whether it's wet or dry."

"If I want I can use the tractor's twin-touch hydrostatic pedals at the same as the individual wheel brakes, since they're on opposite sides. I've used other brands of compact tractors where the pedals are all on the same side. It only works to use them when using cruise control. Deere was definitely thinking when they designed this tractor. I know it's only a Yanmar in Deere skin, but it's worthy of the Deere badge."

**J. N. Cole, Ottawa, Kansas:** "In 2007 I bought five **Sonic Mole** repellents from Northern Tool for \$16.99 apiece. I was doubtful if they'd work, but within two weeks the moles packed up and moved. However, this product appears to be good for just one season. The O-ring seal would not keep moisture out so a lot of corrosion developed around the batteries. I plan to order more units and waterproof them myself."

**Doug Fedderke, Defiance, Ohio:** "My 1975 **BCS** 10 hp rototiller is my best buy. I bought it used from my brother's father-in-law. It sat outside for years. All I did was change the oil, spark plug, and filters and it always fires right up. I like being able to change implements on it. I'd definitely buy another one."

"My **Sears Craftsman** LT1000 17 hp riding mower is my worst buy. It's on its third transmission and has been a pain from the start. When I let off the clutch I can pop a wheelie in sixth gear. I wouldn't recommend this mower to anyone."

**Don Farquharson, Crossfield, Alberta:** "My 2008 **Dodge** pickup equipped with a 6.7-liter diesel engine has a lot of power. It's a definite best buy."

On the "worst buy" side, Don lists **Interstate** batteries. "I can't get these batteries to hold a charge. Sometimes they don't even have enough cranking power to start a warm engine."

**Stephen Charles, Seneca, S. C.:** Stephen likes his **DR** cutter. "I already own an original DR cutter but this new version is a Cadillac compared to the original. It has three forward speeds, big balloon tires, and electric start. It's one tough machine. I loan out my original model to folks who want to clear off bushes, but I keep this new one at home."

**Chuck Hodel, Eureka, Ill.:** "A few years ago I bought a used **Stihl** BG85 blower. It starts easy and has a lot of velocity. We use it to blow material off our driveway, grass off our batting mower, and trash off our combine. It's a handy tool."

**Jack B. Elliott, Florence, Ontario:** "My 1999 **Sears Craftsman** lawn tractor equipped with a 20.5 hp, 2-cyl. Briggs & Stratton engine and 42-in. mower deck came with an extended warranty. The company replaced blades and belts as required, changed the oil, replaced a faulty carburetor, and replaced the batteries at no charge during warranty. I use it to cut at least one acre of lawn around farm buildings and to mow down tall weeds and small brush in the surrounding area. Over the years I've used about six different riding mowers, but this is by far the best one."

**Joe Wojcik, Westboro, Wis.:** Joe nominates his 1999 **Ford New Holland** 3930 4-WD tractor equipped with a front-end loader as his "best buy". "This tractor is cheap to operate and all the controls are user friendly. It has a heated cab which is a big plus."

**J. R. Sheehan, Collierville, Tenn.:** "I used an **Aeroller** lawn aerator attachment kit to convert my front-end tine rototiller to a yard aerator and really like it (ph 316 519-2168; [www.lawn-aerator-attachment.com](http://www.lawn-aerator-attachment.com)). I used



to rent a yard aerator once or twice a year so this kit paid for itself in one use. The aerator's hollow core aerator tines make up to 3-in. deep holes in the lawn to pull soil cores. The rollers are made of solid cast iron, which adds about 40 lbs. to the tiller to achieve deeper aeration in heavy clay soil. The rollers also prevent excessive tine penetration in soft soil to keep from tearing up my lawn."

**David Clark, Sabattus, Maine:** "I enjoy watching RFD TV several times per week on (Continued on next page)