

## Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

acre. We use our IH 3688 115 hp 2-WD tractor to pull it, and it pulls easily without needing weights."

**Glen and Sandy Coates, Indian Valley, Idaho:** "We love our 2006 **Rhino** utility vehicle. It has plenty of power to make it up steep hills on our property, even when it's loaded with rocks. It starts easy and has comfortable bucket seats. No problems. We use this machine every day to haul hay, wood, rocks, and of course our dog, too.

"Our worst buy is our **Oregon Scientific** weather station. We've had it for less than a year but can't get the rain gauge to work at all. Now the dial that rotates for various temperature sensors only works sporadically. The mode to clear the memory of wind speed also doesn't work properly. To return the unit would require taking the whole thing down."

**Fred Miller, Arpin, Wis.:** Two years ago Fred bought a used 1986 **Deere** 332 garden tractor equipped with a 48-in. deck. He says it's his "best buy". "It came with a snowblower and cab with wheel weights. The owner sold this machine because the belt kept coming off. I replaced the belts and haven't had any problems since then. It's powered by a 3-cyl. diesel engine which is much more fuel efficient than a gas engine."

**Lewis Grund, Northwood, Iowa:** "We still use an **International** refrigerator that we bought new in 1953. We've used it every day since then without any problems or service calls. I can't believe that no fluid has ever leaked out to cause any problems in all that time."

**Chuck Stillman, Battle Ground, Wash.:** "My 2002 **Kubota** BX2200 4-WD diesel tractor equipped with a 60-in. mower deck and front-end loader is my best buy. It just keeps on going and is a real workhorse. Best of all, it was built at a U.S. plant."

**Amund Wilkinson, Mineral, Wash.:** Amund likes his 2005 **Fiskar** pole-type tree limb cutter. "I've used and abused this handheld tree trimmer and have left it outside many times. However, it's still working great."

**Phillip Krywosa, Boonville, N.Y.:** "My **DeWalt** 13-in. planer is my worst buy. It wouldn't feed boards through properly so I took it back to the dealer. He cleaned the feed rolls and charged me for it, which I thought was unfair because the planer was still under warranty. It still didn't work right.

"My **Jet** 13-in. planer is also a worst buy. After I use it to plane a couple of boards it gets hot and the safety switch shuts off. Then I have to wait five minutes before I can restart it.

"My **Mantis** rototiller starts good and has plenty of power, and is light enough that I can carry it with one hand. I like to use it to plant Christmas trees, loosening the soil before planting each seedling."

**Dan L. Edens, Ogema, Wis.:** Dan's the satisfied owner of a **Polaris** Sportsman 500 ATV. "It has a convertible dump box behind the driver which I really like. In less than 10 seconds the box can be converted into a comfortable second passenger seat with an adjustable back rest. This ATV has a 'turf mode' rear differential that allows me to turn sharp on lawns without tearing up the grass. Also, it steers like a car on a blacktop road. I can run it in either 2 or 4-WD."

**Donald Walker, Niota, Tenn.:** "My 2003 **Troy-Bilt** rear tine rototiller is my best buy. No problems. It definitely works better than the old front tine rototillers that almost beat you to death."

**Maynard V. Wanner, Dickinson, N. Dak.:** "I haven't had any problems with my 1994 **Ford** F-150 pickup. It has more than 202,000 miles on it, and all I've had to replace were a fan belt and two light bulbs."

**Gary Stefanowicz, Williston, N. Dak.:** "My 2002 **Belarus** 3021 tractor is my worst buy. I've only been able to put about 120 hours on it. The starter drive is faulty and can't be replaced so I had to buy a complete rebuilt starter. Also, the unit jumps out of gear all the time. The electrical system is non functional, at best."

**Bryan Ravenscroft, Tuttle, Idaho:** "I use the **Floppy Sprinkler** system ([www.floppysprinkler.com](http://www.floppysprinkler.com)) to irrigate 15 acres of pasture and think it's an excellent product. We have a lot of wind where I live,



and the Floppy head puts out a very uniform droplet size, which isn't subject to drifting in the wind. That makes it more water efficient because it produces zero mist, minimizing evaporation before it hits the ground. In southern Idaho, the availability of water is becoming critically short.

"My setup uses buried pipe with risers – like pop-up lawn sprinklers – every 30 to 40 ft. There are 400 sprinkler heads in all. The system operates at a lower pressure than impact or gear-drive sprinklers, and there's no moving parts so there's almost zero maintenance. But there is one major shortcoming to the way my setup works."

"Because I use canal water and not clean water, the filters I installed are too small and cause me extra work for about two weeks in late May. The 500 micron filters needed for Floppy sprinklers plug up quite regularly during this time with a clear gelatinous biological material that I have been told is slime mold. It takes me as much as an hour each day to clean out the filters. In hindsight, I should have chosen larger sized 500-micron filters, so they wouldn't plug up so quickly. If I was using ground water or some other clean water source, I wouldn't have these problems.

"The company also has an overhead cable system. Sprinkler heads attach to permanently installed cables running overhead. The benefit of both the systems is that you can irrigate any size or shape field and the Floppy head nozzle is very efficient."

**David H. Hunt, Pass Christian, Miss.:** "My 1996 **DR Power** Wagon is my best buy. It's built tough and does everything I ask it to. I work it hard but it has required only routine maintenance. When this one dies I'll buy another one no matter what it's priced at."

**Kyle Carrigan, Corsicana, Texas:** Kyle's happy with his 2006 **Arctic Cat** 4-WD ATV equipped with an automatic transmission. "I looked at a lot of different makes of 4-wheelers before I bought my Arctic Cat. It was the only one at the time that offered true 4-WD, and its overall rating for the chassis and ground clearance was at the top of its class. Anyone can buy a Honda, Yamaha, or Kawasaki, but if they do they're paying extra for the name."

**Jim Cassidy, Nokomis, Ill.:** Jim is on his sixth **Bobcat** skid loader. His latest one is on tracks and is powered by a **Kubota** 56 hp diesel engine. The cab has both a heater and an air conditioner.

"I'm both a farmer and a machine operator so I get calls for all kinds of jobs, in all kinds of weather and soil conditions, but my Bobcat never lets me down," says Cassidy. "A lot of my work involves earth moving and construction. I haul my Bobcat on a trailer

## "Best Buy" Power Grader Grooms Country Road

After years of trying to groom his driveway with a tractor blade, Doug Abernathy, Williamstown, N.C., says his **DR Power Grader** is an absolute pleasure to operate.

Abernathy and several neighbors live along a quarter mile lane made up of rock, clay and shells. It's very prone to potholes. He pulls the Power Grader behind an ATV. At 4 ft. wide, it takes several passes to cover the lane.

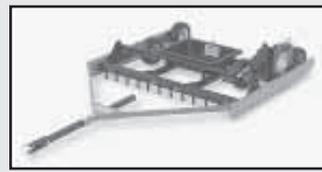
Abernathy is retired but operates a gun shop on his place. "I needed a decent lane for my customers. What makes the DR work is that it has carbide teeth that really cut into surfaces that need repair," he says. "It has a weight box that lets me add just the right amount of weight for the condition of the road and there's a finishing blade to smooth the surface."

It also has electric depth control which allows on-the-go adjustment. And he can pull an optional drag behind to do a final smoothing.

The Power Grader sells for about \$1,300. A 5-ft. wide model is also available. ([www.drpower.com](http://www.drpower.com); 800-687-6575).



**Doug Abernathy says his DR Power Grader is a "pleasure to operate". He uses it to groom his driveway, pulling it behind an ATV.**



equipped with ramps and keep the tracks on it at all times. People like to watch it at work. I trade for a new model after 2,200 hours.

"I use several attachments with the machine including a digger, trench cutter, backhoe, root rake, post hole digger, grapple bucket, and concrete breaker."

**David Booth, Miranda, Calif.:** David likes his new **DeWalt** 36-volt Lithium ion cordless tools. They include a reciprocating saw, screwdriver/hammer drill, 7 1/4-in. circular saw, and flashlight.

"The tools have new Li-ion battery technology that uses iron phosphate in the cathode instead of cobalt oxide. It results in much better thermal stability and safety than the type of Li-ion cells previously used extensively in cell phones and laptops. These tools just keep on running. They have incredible torque, and because of the cycle life of the cells, the batteries should last for years. They recharge super fast, too."

**David Gingerich, Summertown, Tenn.:** "We're well pleased with our 2006 **Deutz-Fahr** AgroPlus 70 4-WD tractor. It has almost 1,000 hours on it with no problems. It runs smooth and has a lot of power, and it starts as good in the winter as it does in the summer. It's also fuel efficient, using just 1.7 gallons per hour. But the best thing about this tractor is that it has an air-cooled engine, which reduces maintenance by 40 percent compared to a water-cooled engine. Overheating isn't an issue.

"Our other **Deutz** tractor, a model 3006, is more than 30 years old but still runs great."

**Norman Zimmerman, Lime Springs, Iowa:** Norman says his 1965 **Lincoln** 225-amp welder has been trouble-free. "I don't own a cutting torch so I've also done quite a bit of cutting with this welder."

**Dave Hauck, Utica, Minn.:** "My 2004 **GM** Duramax HD 2500 pickup, equipped with an Allison transmission, is my best buy. I bought it used two years ago with about 28,000 miles on it. It has a lot of pulling power.

"My 1990 **GM** 3500 pickup equipped with a 454 cu. in. engine is also a best buy. It has more than 220,000 miles on it but is still going strong."

**Chad Travis, Drusco, Ark.:** "My 1998 **Stihl** 46 Magnum chainsaw has been reliable with no problems. I've used it to cut a lot of wood. It has a lot of power and is fuel effi-

cient. I use an Amsoil mix and it runs clean producing little, if any, smoke."

**James McGowan, Russell Springs, Ky.:** James is the satisfied owner of a 2005 **Suzuki** Ozark 250 4-wheeler ATV. "I've used this machine for both work and play with no problems. I still have a **Suzuki** ATV that I bought in 1990. It has almost 14,000 miles on it.

"For years I've carried a **Leatherman** knife which has a bunch of different built-in tools. When the pins in the blades wore out, I replaced them myself and used the knife for another year. Then the blade broke. I sent the knife in to the company. Instead of repairing the old knife, the company sent me a brand new one. That's customer service."

**Rance Ford, Tecumcari, New Mexico:** "My 2007 **GM** Silverado pickup equipped with a diesel engine and Allison transmission is my best buy. It pulls loads well and is fuel efficient."

**David P. Esz, Owensville, Ohio:** The 1991 **Toyota** Corolla station wagon David bought used three years ago rates as his "best buy". "It has more than 170,000 miles on it but has required only routine maintenance. It's a tough little wagon. I use it to haul everything from feed to rabbits, which I take to shows."

**Larry R. Dykhuizen, Pocahontas, Ark.:** "My best buy is the digital air gauge that I bought at **Sears**. It's very simple but works well.

"My 1999 **Ryobi** weed eater works great and always starts. Two pulls on the starter and it's up and running.

"My 1999 **Homelite** chainsaw is the best I've ever owned. It starts every time. We heat our house with wood so I use it a lot."

**Kelly Railsback, Lynn, Ind.:** "The **Poulan** Pro 25cc 17-in. string trimmer I bought in 2006 is my best buy. It starts easy and is easy to operate. With its dual string system it cuts well and vibration is minimal."

**Gary Nonamaker, Cedar, Kansas:** Gary's impressed with his **Vermeer** haying equipment. "I bought a new Vermeer 605F baler in 1979 and used it every year through 2006 with very few problems. It still had the original belts when I traded for a new 605M model. When I decided to update I didn't even look at any other brand. I made about 1,300 bales with the 605M model last year. It's an awesome piece of equipment and can bale

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