

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

ports Doug about his 1998 Dresser TD-9H dozer, which he bought used in 2003.

Neal Blanton, Murphy, N.C.: Neal likes his 1999 Echo weedeater. "I have a lot of weedeating to do, and it takes four tanks of gas to do everything. My Echo weedeater has worked great with no repairs. If I want I can use a skilsaw blade on it to cut small trees."



Robert Coppock, Vegreville, Alberta: "My BCS 852 2-wheeled tractor is my best buy (Earth Tools, Owenton, Ky. ph 502 484-3988; www.earthtoolsbcs.com). We use it in our farm yard. This is a 4-speed tractor, with a forward and reverse shuttle and a wet clutch. There are no belts on it. I use it with several attachments including a brush cutter, a rototiller, a snowblower, and chipper-shredder attachments. The snowblower attachment also doubles in the spring as a high volume water pump to move water from flooded areas across a road or driveway. The machine is powered by a 13 hp Honda engine that has a lot of working power.

"On the negative side, the throttle mechanism on the Honda engine ices up in very cold weather. Also, the studs that hold the Quick Hitch to the transmission are difficult to keep tight."

Barry Fennig, Celina, Ohio: "My Sears Craftsman 10-in. portable table saw is my best buy. I used it to help build a 2,000-sq. ft. log home and it worked great, cutting and ripping all the trim and lumber.

"My 2001 Hyundai Sonata car equipped with a V-6 engine is my worst buy. The problem was the unibody frame that supports the front wheels and the engine was defective. The frame cracked, and at 108,000 miles a tire almost broke off it. The part that was needed to solve the problem cost \$1,500 and labor was another \$500. However, the dealer charged me only for labor as the car is covered by a 100,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty. Otherwise this car has been trouble-free. It runs great and is fuel efficient."

Ed Basaroba, Fisher Branch, Manitoba: Ed bought a 2003 Kubota M-120 front wheel assist loader tractor used last year and says it's his "best buy". "It had 1,163 hours when I bought it."

"My wife was cutting hay when the pto fell apart."

In the "worst buy" column, "Last year I bought a used 2005 New Holland 1431 discbine from a Deere dealer. The first week we used it, my wife was cutting hay when the pto fell apart at 2,200 rpm's. Luckily, no one was standing behind the tractor. I took the machine to a New Holland dealer to complain about the poor factory welding. They told me a field rep would come out to look at it. But I never heard anything and the broken parts disappeared."

Gordon S. Arnold, Fillmore, Ind.: He likes Can Am Supply rust converter paint but has a problem with the company's marketing program. "We ordered this product last June and it worked great. The problem is the salesman won't stop calling us. We got some-

where between 50 and 60 calls in three months."

William Henley, Whitt, Texas: "My 2000 Deere 4600 utility tractor is my worst buy. The body is made of a plastic type of material that's falling apart at the hood, grill, cowl, and fuel filler cap. All these parts are either shattered or cracking and coming apart. I tried several times to get help from the company but with no luck."

"My Scag zero turn riding mower cuts straight and level with no problems. It's a best buy (Scag Power Equipment, Mayville, Wis. www.scag.com)."

Neal S. McCleary, Elkton, Md.: Neal nominates his Deere 12-volt battery-powered "power luber" grease gun as his "best buy". "With a conventional flexible grease tube you need another person to hold the coupler on the fitting. But with this battery-powered gun, I can use one hand to pull the trigger and my other hand to hold the hose on the zerk fitting."

"My Black & Decker drill is my worst buy. It has a keyless chuck that won't hold a bit no matter how much I tighten it. They offer a 5/8-in. drill bit but they cut the shank down to 3/8 in., which is so thin that it can bend. The shanks should be 1/2 or 1 inch in diameter."

William Byler, Bonners Ferry, Idaho: "My 2006 Load Trail dump trailer will dump a big load of shavings on battery power (Load Trail, Inc., Sumner, Texas ph 903 784-8719;



www.loadtrail.com). The tailgate can be opened sideways or down, making it easy to use. The pump and battery are mounted on front with a remote control. It has many thoughtful little features.

"My 2003 Ford 450 4-WD flatbed truck equipped with a diesel engine is my worst buy. It had constant problems with the computer and electronic fuel injectors. The dealer fixed them at no cost until the warranty ran out, and then we had to pay. But the delays were usually a week or longer, and there were about 15 of these delays. We've probably spent \$30,000 on repairs on this vehicle."

Eddie L. Gingerich, Cazenovia, Wis.: "I like my Rol-Air 2-piston, single stage portable air compressor, (www.rolair.com pressors.com). I bought it used. The recommended air pressure for it is 120 psi, but without knowing this I set it for 160 and used it every day for three years, sometimes three times a day, to fill a 200-gal. pressure tank. A few months ago it blew a gasket. But that problem was fixed using some wonderful stuff from NAPA Auto Parts called Fasweld."

"The Tecumseh 5 hp gas engine on my lawn mower putters and stops whenever I start mowing. I could keep the engine running if I could get to the choke fast enough, but there's no needle adjustment anywhere. Over the years I've worked with a lot of different engines, but nothing as complicated as this Tecumseh. The carburetor is totally messed up. And when this engine does run it guzzles gas."

Richard Wood, North Berwick, Maine: Richard's not happy with the DeLonghi dehumidifier he bought at Home Depot. "I purchased this dehumidifier to reduce the humidity in my cellar from 90 to about 60 percent. The electronic controls failed after a

He Likes His Portable Sawmill

Thurman Kremser, a retired physics professor in Kutztown, Penn., is highly pleased with the performance of his "Skillmill" portable sawmill.

The saw uses a circular blade rather than a bandsaw or chainsaw-type blade. It provides a better cut and reduces the amount of planing needed. Kremser had wanted a highly portable sawmill that could cut straight, and the Skillmill does that.

The Skillmill is uncomplicated and is lightweight which makes it easy to move. It's small enough that it can be transported on top of a car. You can take it to the logs. One man can set it up and operate it.

It's known as a swing mill because the blade, when in normal use, can be rotated, or swung, from a vertical position to a horizontal position.

After watching the unit work at a show, Kremser ordered it directly from New Zealand where it's manufactured.

Another feature of the Skillmill is that its mechanism can also be used for "slabbing" with a chainsaw.

Kremser says the Skillmill would be ideal for isolated and wooded vacation spots in Canada or elsewhere - anywhere logs are

couple of weeks. Home Depot doesn't sell these Chinese-built units any more. I plan to tear into it and convert it to analog with a simple on-off switch and humidistat knob."

Donald Miller, Dongola, Ill.: "My 2006 Vermeer round baler has been trouble-free.

"My New Holland disc mower has also been trouble-free. This is my second New Holland disc mower. I used the other one for 15 years and it required only routine maintenance."

Gary Stephens, Goodrich, Texas: "My 2007 Kawasaki Mule is an awesome utility vehicle with a lot of bed capacity. It's easy to work on and can handle a variety of farm tasks. It's reliable, and I have yet to get it stuck anywhere."

John Stewart, Eden, Ontario: John nominates his 1989 Deere 4555 MFWD tractor, which he bought used two years ago, as his "best buy". "It's an excellent tractor, powerful and reliable with few electronic controls. We expect it to perform reliably for another 20 years."

"My Davis Instruments Weather Wizard III weather station is my worst buy. The basic weather station is well made. However, the accessories for it are absolutely terrible. The repeaters and software package were inoperable, and the company's helpline wasn't much help. When I asked for a refund I was threatened by their credit department. The entire experience with this company was one of utter frustration."

James Knowlton, Poplarville, Miss.: A 2003 Chevrolet 4500 truck equipped with a Duramax engine and Allison transmission rates as James's "worst buy". "The truck shakes and rattles, and the mirrors are hard to see out of. The dashboard vibrates loudly, and the truck rides like an old buckboard. The mirrors shook terribly until I fixed them, and the brakes are bad. The engine and transmission are the only good components."

Tom Lundgren, Olalla, Wash.: Tom likes his 1997 Stihl 021 chainsaw. "I've used it to cut 10 to 30 cords of firewood per year. Last spring I took it in for a minor repair and tune-up. It has been an awesome, trouble-free saw."

Brent Norton, Lodi, Ohio: "I like my Plews-Edelmann 18-volt heavy duty grease gun (www.plews-edelmann.com). It's equipped with a 40-in. long flexible hose. It



Thurman Kremser likes his "Skillmill" portable sawmill. The saw uses a circular blade rather than a bandsaw or chainsaw-type blade. It provides a better cut and reduces the amount of planing needed.

plentiful but lumber is scarce. The electric-powered unit can be powered by a generator or plugged into a 110-volt outlet.

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saves wear and tear on my hands and weighs just 18 lbs. so it's easy to carry around. I hit the trigger to squirt some grease, and three seconds later I can move to the next zerk. Also, the charger recharges quickly."

Tracy Hibbens, Mackinaw, Ill.: "My Case Farmall DX48 utility tractor equipped with a model 118 loader is my best buy. This little tractor has more power and torque than many bigger tractors. It starts on the coldest of mornings and is highly maneuverable in tight spots. I like to call it my 4-WD dozer."

"My Hustler zero turn riding mower pow-

"This little tractor has more power and torque than many bigger tractors."

ered by a 23 hp Kawasaki engine is a best buy. It's one of the strongest built mowers on the market. I haven't found anywhere that I can't mow with it."

Daniel Ball, Pomerene, Arizona: Daniel's pleased with his Husqvarna chainsaws - a 1989 model L65 and a 1995 L77 model. "Both saws work great. They have engine speeds of 13,500 rpm's, which results in faster cutting and longer lasting chains and also makes it easy on the operator. I've used each saw to cut more than 100 cords of wood. I just ordered a model 455 Rancher from the company."

Richard Loomis, Unadilla, N.Y.: A 1980 Dodge Aspen car that he bought used rates as Richard's "best buy". "This car had only about 43,000 miles when I bought it and it had always been in a garage. It's powered by a slant six engine that runs smooth and gets more than 20 mpg. With decent care this car will gain value, not lose it like new cars do. The old cars had some style and class compared to today's look-alike, dowdy cars. Keep and fix your old stuff. Most of the time it pays."

Lori Pieper, Boyd, Minn.: "My Sweda food dehydrator provides a quick way to process foods and saves on storage space. Ground-up dried vegetables make healthy flavoring, and work great as a soup starter."