

**Greg Weidmayer, Manchester, Mich.:** "My 1995 **Deere** 7800 2-WD tractor has a quiet cab and plenty of power."

**Rex Berkey, Rock, Mich.:** "I recently noticed that my 1997 **Ariens** ST824 walk-behind snowblower was getting harder to use. Being the smart lad I am, I gave it some thought and figured out it was working as well as always, but I was 53 when I first got it and now I'm 70. Seriously, this machine works great and is a best buy."

**Karen Williams, Sorento, Ill.:** "The firewood carrier we bought from **Backwoods**



**Products** makes carrying firewood into our house a simple chore (woodcarriers@yahoo.com). It sells for \$14.99 plus S&H. I just load the firewood into the carrier and grab the wooden handles with one hand, which leaves my other hand free for opening and closing doors. It makes life much more simple."

**Lester Rose, Yellville, Ark.:** "I ordered my **Aircat** 1200 air impact wrench over the internet for well below the normal price (www.aircat.com; ph 888 424-7228). It's rated at 1,200 ft. lbs. reverse torque, and I think that's accurate. I've used this impact wrench with a 3/4 adapter to remove big bolts that hold the blades on my bush hog. It has never failed to remove a bolt yet.

"I bought a whole set of **New Britain** 3/4-in. sockets at an auction for \$75. They work great.

"I bought a **Forney** 140FI MIG welder (www.forneyind.com; ph 800 521-6038). Forney is a very old Italian company and I bought this welder on the internet figuring it was still a fine company. The main problem so far is the welding lead on it is only 80 in. long, whereas on most other brands it's 10 ft. long. It's supposed to be a 140-amp model, but I really doubt that. It sure isn't in the same range as a Miller 140. I paid more than \$600 for this machine. Even though it's a MIG welder, it came without a regulator to hook up to the gas bottle. I feel I got took on this machine.

"My little **Deutz Allis** 18 hp, 4-WD diesel tractor is my best friend. I've never seen another 18 hp tractor that comes close to doing what this one can do. I recently bought a used **Kubota** loader to put on it. I use a 3-pt. mounted wood splitter with it and also a box to haul firewood and other stuff. It's powered by a 3-cyl. water-cooled, Japanese-made engine that starts every time and never seems to run out of power."

**Ojala Farm, New Ipswich, N.H.:** "Our **Deere** 25 walk-behind lawn mower has been nothing but trouble. The 'flip flop' handlebar on it that's supposed to control forward speed is disgusting. The linkage designed to raise the mower broke and the deck plugs up with grass."

**Bill McChesney, New Galilee, Penn.:** "I decided to try **Battery Equaliser** after reading about it in FARM SHOW (www.batteryequaliser.com; ph 888 851-4431). It's a non-corrosive, non flammable, water-based liquid battery treatment formulated to extend the life and performance of any new or used lead acid battery.

"I bought it because the batteries on my old **Oliver** 1850 tractor had to be charged if the tractor sat for more than 2 or 3 days. Equaliser

solved the problem. I parked the tractor early last November and it started right up in mid-January."

**Tim Stegman, Neche, N. Dak.:** "My 2003 **Wood-Mizer** LT-30 D33 sawmill equipped with a **Kubota** diesel engine is a pleasure to operate. The controls are handy and user-friendly, and the head is solid as a rock and cuts true.

"My 1994 **Mobile Dimension** 128 sawmill is built too light. In dense hardwoods like oak, the saw head jumps in the cut when going any faster than at a snail's pace. It would probably work good in big softwood logs, though."

**Robert R. Wackerlin, Waterman, Ill.:** "I really like my 2013 **Thunder Creek** fuel trailer (www.thundercreekequipment.com; ph 866 535-7667). The design, engineering and craftsmanship are outstanding, and it's backed up by great people."

**Alvin Berends, Maynard, Minn.:** A 2005 **Ford** F-350 Dually pickup equipped with a 6.0-liter engine rates as Alvin's "worst buy". "The company put all sorts of pollution components on this pickup but won't stand behind them. It has caused us lots of trouble, and I don't know why that should be at our expense."

**Harve H. Moses, Toledo, Ill.:** Harve is in the lawn care business and says he really likes his two 2011 **Exmark** Lazer ZX series riding mowers equipped with **Kohler** engines. "We put 200 to 300 hrs. a year on these machines. They now have right at 1,000 hrs. apiece with no downtime. The company's warranty and dealer service are great."

**Moses Renno, Darlington, Wis.:** "We use the **GrowTech** hoof trimming shears we bought at **Nasco** to cut everything from goat hooves to horse hair to tomato plants and even tin (www.enasco.com; ph 800 558-9595)."

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**Gordon Datts, Chariton, Iowa:** "My 2013 **Kawasaki** Mule 610 utility vehicle always starts right up, winter or summer. It has 4-WD and differential lock so it'll go almost anywhere. I wish it had a shorter turning radius, though."

**Dale Hazelton, New Hampton, N.Y.:** Dale nominates **Fluid Film**, a lubricant and corrosion-preventing undercoat product, as his "best buy" (www.fluid-film.com; ph 888 387-3522). "I had tried scraping and wire brushing and painting my truck's frame with **Rustoleum** and other rust converting paints, but it always flaked off. Then I read about this lanolin-based product and bought a gallon. **Fluid Film** crept into every crevice and pore of rust on the truck's frame to keep it from rusting any further. I reapply it once a year."

**Shannon Wycoff, Embarras, Minn.:** "Our 2013 **Deere** 304X riding mower has all-wheel steering which greatly reduces our mowing time. All we do is put in gas and go. No breakdowns.

"Our 2013 **Polaris** Ranger 800 EPS utility vehicle is a handy machine. It always starts and runs great. It's easy to get in and out of, and the electronic power steering is really nice in tight spots.

"The 2004 **Bobcat** T190 tracked skid loader we bought used in 2013 appears to be bullet-proof. We bought a **CID Attachments** rotary brush mower for it that cuts through brush like you can't believe (www.cidattachments.com; ph 336 859-2002). It'll even cut down small trees. I'd recommend this mower to



Back in 1977 **John Martens** used the engine, drivetrain and frame from an **Oliver 40** combine to build this twin-table swather. He says it's still working great.

## Twin-Table Swather Has Worked Great For 39 Years

**John Martens** built his twin-table swather in 1977, a year after FARM SHOW began publishing. Like FARM SHOW, the swather is still working great. Nearly 92, Martens is the only operator to ever run it, which is one reason he says it still works.

"A knowledgeable operator is the best part of any machine," says Martens. "With a right side table swather like this, you can't go too fast. That's why I knew it would never be adopted commercially. Most operators are too concerned about speed."

Martens used the engine, drive and frame from an **Oliver 40** combine with a **Continental** engine and 5-speed transmission. He usually runs it in 4th gear at about 4 mph with the engine at 1,800 rpm's.

The twin tables are **IH 4000** swather tables priced at about \$3,000 each when new. With the help of his brother-in-law, an experienced welder, he mounted the 19 1/2-ft. tables on a frame fabricated from 2 lengths of 4 by 6-in., 3/16-in. tubing. One table, mounted to the front of the stripped-down combine frame, feeds to the right. The second table, extending out to the right side, feeds to the left.

The right side table is pivot-mounted to the combine frame with a large caster wheel at the far end of the side table. A 5-in. dia., 4-ft. hydraulic cylinder swings the right side

table back alongside the combine for transit between fields.

Each table is mounted to its frame section with 2 lifting arms with 3 springs each that Martens bought new from **Versatile**. They had been designed for **Versatile's** own swather tables.

"When I finish a field, I can simply lift the swathers and swing the right side table back into place without stopping," says Martens. "It all happens on the go."

Martens said an early decision in the planning process was to use hydraulic drives for the swathers. Hydraulic motors and some 300 ft. of hoses cost about \$6,000.

"I never regretted replacing mechanical drives with hydraulics," says Martens, who used 22 hp motors for each table.

He says that while many swather makers visited his farm to see the twin tables in use, the hydraulic drives were the only components he saw commercialized. While companies may not have adopted the design, Martens' neighbors appreciated it.

"The twin tables cut 38 ft. in a single pass, which was wider than what was on the market at the time, so I did a lot of customer swathing," recalls Martens.

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anyone.

"Our 2006 **Cub Cadet** LT1050 lawn tractor was a piece of junk from the start and I spent more time working on it than mowing. The blade spindles were always failing, and the wire on the electric-operated pto ripped off. Also, the tires were made of rubber so thin that holes developed in them. The only good thing was the **Kohler** engine."

**Vincent Smith, Trout Creek, Mont.:** "My 2014 **Honda** CTX 1300 motorcycle rides and handles better than any other motorcycle I've owned. That includes 3 Harley's, 2 Honda Gold Wings, a Vincent, an Ariel Square, a Triumph 650, and a BSA Gold Star.

"After I bought my 2005 **Haulmark** enclosed trailer I found 28 screws that missed the overhead support beams. The brake tabs on the wheel drums bent up against the drums so the electric brakes wouldn't work. Inside I found 18 holes in the panels and flooring, and the wiring for the lights was installed wrong. The roof leaked, and the axle shackles were hooked up incorrectly so that one axle couldn't support any weight. The company wouldn't help."

**Don Onsager, Salem, Ind.:** "We use our 2013 **Ford** F-150 STX pickup equipped with a 5-liter engine to pull our pontoon boat, 30-ft. travel trailer, and 16-ft. hay wagon. It's a

best buy.

"We owned 1982, 1986, and 1990 **Chevrolet** 3/4-ton pickups, and the engine on each one went bad with under 50,000 miles. These engines couldn't take the abuse of farm work."

**Robert Zurfluh, Monticello, Wis.:** "More than 20 years ago my dad bought a small **Makita** angle grinder, and we still use it regularly.

"I like my **Schnee's** winter pack boots (www.schnees.com; ph 800 922-1562). I have one pair that's more than 10 years old. I wear another pair from November through March for working with cattle, logging, hunting and snowmobiling. These boots are warm, dry and long lasting.

"Our 2000 **Honda** Rancher 350 2-WD 4-wheeler is on its third set of tires. I abuse the heck out of this machine but it keeps right on going. No problems.

"My wife loves her 2011 **Speed Queen** washing machine (www.speedqueen.com). It has all metal parts and gears instead of the plastic parts found on many other brands, and it's comparably priced and has a better warranty. Our farm clothes are very hard on washing machines, but we're happy with this one.

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