

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

W.S. Hunter, Dilley, Texas: "We're happy with our 2000 **Dodge** 2500 heavy duty pickup equipped with a quad cab and a 24-valve Cummins turbocharged diesel engine. We have more than 22,000 miles on it. It averages about 19 mpg. On a 2,000-mile trip last year it got 24 mpg at an average speed of about 65 mph. It rides a little rough but has a lot of pulling power. The 4-speed automatic transmission requires very little downshifting even when towing a 24-ft. fifth wheel trailer."

Tom O' Brian, Dimmitt, Texas: "I'm happy with it. No problems at all," says Tom about his 1993 **Kubota** tractor which he bought used. "My only expense was for a new battery. It easily handles our Bush Hog 6-ft. shredder, which is also a best buy."

Dennis Robertson, Eagle, Neb.: "My **Lincoln** electric Weld Pak 100 welder runs on 115-volts so I can take it anywhere and plug it in. I've used it to weld up to 1/4-in. thick steel with no problems. All welds are still holding."

Edwin Mitchell, Brantley, Alabama: "Over the years I've owned three **Husqvarna** chain saws and one Husqvarna weed eater. They all start easy and have had few problems."

"My 1995 **Ford** 6640 tractor is my worst buy. The problem is that it uses a lot of oil. The dealer did a ring job on the engine but that didn't help at all. Then he installed a new engine, but unfortunately it used as much oil

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as the old one. If we worked the engine hard it would use about a quart of oil every day. A local mechanic told me to use Shell Rotella oil in the engine. I did, and after three oil changes it doesn't use oil any more."

Richard C. Bowman, Chambersburg, Pa.: "My **Sears Craftsman** lawn tractor/mower equipped with a Briggs & Stratton 18 hp twin-cylinder engine and 46-in. deck is my best buy. The engine has a lot of power and runs smooth. I weigh 270 lbs. yet I can mow 45 degree slopes with ease (I go up and down the slope, not crosswise). It's very easy on fuel, too. After 10 years of use all I had to replace was one belt on the mower. The only thing I don't like is that there are no grease zerks on the steering parts (tie rods, drag links, etc.). I paid a welder \$2.00 to fix one of the ball joints instead of spending \$800 for new Sears parts."

David J. Fangman, Elma, Iowa: "My 1989 **Case-IH** 7140 tractor is my best buy. It has more than 5,000 hours on it. It runs well, has a lot of power, and rides nice. It had a few oil leaks which we had to fix, but no major problems."

"My **PFM** rock picker is a best buy. The hydraulic swing on the tongue makes it convenient to pick up several rocks without having to back up and move over or circle around."

Byron Tims, McDavid, Fla.: Byron's impressed with his **Kubota** B2150 4-WD tractor equipped with a 24 hp engine and a 60-in. belly mower. "I use it to cut about 2 1/2 acres of grass and to pick up loads of leaves. I also use it with a trailer in my garden to haul loads of heavy, green wood from the

woods. The starter and alternator needed repairs and a seal on the mower had to be replaced. Otherwise, it has required only routine maintenance. I've got about 800 hours on it. One negative is that the belly mower sometimes drags going over high places such as terraces or ditches."

Earl H. Mitchell, Bellevue, Ohio: Earl's happy with his 1998 **Deere** 345 lawn and garden tractor equipped with a 48-in. mower and 42-in. snowblower. "It replaced my 1977 Deere 212, which was an excellent tractor. In fact, at trade-in time, the 212 was still using its original spark plug. But the 345 is a much superior tractor because it has power steering, hydraulic lift, an automatic transmission, and a tighter turning radius. It handles the snowblower particularly well and is a real pleasure to operate."

Paul Shuster, St. Johnsville, N.Y.: "I'm well satisfied with the drill bit sharpener I purchased from **Stan MacDonald** (402



Rosedale ave., Foxboro, Ontario, Canada K0K 2B0). I bought it after reading about it in FARM SHOW. It's simple to operate and does an excellent job of sharpening compared to other brands. The sharpening process doesn't take much time and when I'm done the bits are like new."

Fred Buhland, Elmira, Mich.: "It's a great all-around tractor," says Fred about his **Kubota** 8200 tractor equipped with an **Alo** front-end loader. "I use it for moving dirt and blowing snow and other all-purpose work. I liked it so well I bought a 24 hp Kubota tractor equipped with a front-end loader and mower."

Brian Folmer, Pen Argyl, Pa.: Brian's had bad luck with his 1998 **Deere** 348 baler. "We bought it to replace our **Deere** 347 baler which had some years on it. We thought the new baler would decrease our downtime, but we were wrong. The first problem was that the company was five months late in delivering the baler. The knottor mechanism didn't work right and the baler jumped up and down from the start. The front hitch bolt broke after only one year of use, and the bearings came loose on one of the wheels. The filtering screen wasn't screwed into place in the bale kicker's oil reserve. The piston for the kicker was destroyed when a fitting broke and went into the piston. The dealer wasn't very prompt in fixing any of these problems."

Roy Crane, Martinsville, Ill.: Roy's the satisfied owner of used a **Brandt** 860 8-in. dia., 60-ft. long auger equipped with a swingaway hopper which he bought used three years ago. "I was unfamiliar with this brand of auger and was apprehensive about buying this one when I ran across it at a local implement dealer. It was priced at a reasonable \$650 so I took it home and put it to work. It's equipped with a pto main drive and hydraulic drive hopper and raises and lowers hydraulically. It has performed well after a lot of hard use. I'm well pleased with it."

Dean McDaniel, Beaver, Okla.: "My **New Holland** 688 round baler does a great job of starting bales and makes them nice and tight. It also does a good job ejecting bales."

"My **Vermeer** 605J round baler is my worst buy. I bought it to put net wrap on my bales but found that it did a poor job. I could put one good wrap on, but then the next bale would have too much wrap on one side and not enough on the other. I finally traded it in for a **New Holland**."

Victor Cripps, Gladwin, Mich.: "My best buy is my 1995 **Dodge** 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a 318 cu. in. engine. It has more than 200,000 miles on it but is still going strong."

"I still use my **International Farmall M** tractor equipped with a narrow front end. I also like my **Farmall** 450 equipped with a wide front end. It does an outstanding job for its size. It starts right up even when the temperature is way below zero."

Douglas Fournier, Richmond, Mich.: "My **Sunflower** 25-ft. disk leaves the ground nice and level without any ridges. It does an excellent job in heavy trash."

"My 1998 **Ford** 3/4-ton pickup is my worst buy. It uses too much fuel and is hard to get into 4-WD."

Joseph Azis, Ashtabula, Ohio: "I like my 2000 **Vicon** CM2200 mower. It's well designed and well built."

"My **Massey Ferguson** 240-4 tractor does a nice job of handling this mower."

Donald H. Berry, Spencer, Ind.: "I like my 2000 **Dodge** 2500 Ram 4-WD pickup. It's built heavy and has a quiet cab and comfortable ride."

"My '**Corn Pro**' livestock trailer (Cornelius Mfg., Rt. 1, Box 104A, Elnora, Ind. 475292 ph 812 636-4319) is my best buy. It's built heavy, pulls easy, and trails straight. The urethane paint finish is durable and looks great."

Michael Sykes, Wake Forest, N.C.: "We built our house in 1986 and for 15 years have paid nothing for heating or air conditioning. This savings has already paid for the house. During hurricanes Fran and Floyd we had



electricity - thanks to the solar panels - when no one else did for 14 days. We can now sell our extra electricity back to the co-op for cash," says Michael, who built the **Enertia** house which was featured in FARM SHOW's Vol. 12, No. 4 (Enertia Building Systems, 13312 Garffe Sherron Road, Wake Forest, N.C. 27587 ph 919 556-0177; Website: www.enertia.com). "It's a no-furnace house built with salt-injected wood that requires little or no energy to heat or cool. The house has insulation only in the roof. Its interior and exterior walls are made of wood that has been pressure-treated and injected with salt to enable it to absorb and store heat or cold. The dense, treated lumber slowly releases stored energy into the home over an extended period of time, thus reducing energy demands. The key feature of the new-style house is the "envelope" construction of the north and south walls which are double-lay-

ered with an air space between. Heated air flows freely in a circular motion through the walls, ceiling and basement, radiating into the house through interior walls.

"I now build these houses and can't get them up fast enough."

James L. Evans, Hammond, N.Y.: "My 2000 **New Idea** 5200 9-ft. 3-in. disc mower conditioner is my best buy. It'll mow through any kind of grass whether it's wet or dry, and at a fast speed - maybe faster than I should be driving the tractor. All I have to do is hook

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up, grease it, and go."

"My 1999 **Hesston** 9-ft. 3-in. windrower is my worst buy. Every time I use it I seemed to have down time. The main problem is that the mower sections keep breaking and they're hard to change even though they are the bolt-on type. I adjusted everything as recommended in the owner's manual."

David M. Welling, Ridgeway, Ohio: "My 2001 **Dodge** 2500 SLT pickup equipped with a 24-valve Cummins air-cooled diesel engine and 4-speed automatic transmission is my best buy. It has a lock-up torque converter and a 3:55 rear end gear ratio. The only problem was that it took a long time to get it. I ordered it in February 2000 but didn't receive it until four months later. However, it was worth the wait. I really like the black-over-gray finish. I also like the vehicle's power and torque. With all that torque and the anti-spin rear axle, I have to be careful or I'll end up going sideways."

"Regarding **Harbor Freight** tools, you really have to watch what you buy. Some of the products are misleading as far as their claims of being made in the U.S.A. For example, I ordered a Hanson drill bit set. The index box was made in the U.S., but the drill bits were made in China and were of poor quality."

"I've owned **Snap-On** tools for more than 22 years and have never been disappointed with them. I've traded and upgraded toolboxes and tools over the years, both hand-operated and power models, and their trade-in value is great. I've used a 1/2-in. air impact tool for 20 years and it has never been rebuilt. I traded it for a new 2000 model and the dealer gave me \$75 for it. Snap-On tools cost a little more, but in the end you don't have a piece of junk when it comes time to trade or upgrade."

J.M. Leininger, Jr., Loudonville, Ohio: "My **International** CX 80 front wheel assist tractor is easy to handle and starts good in cold weather."

"My 1991 **Honda** Four-Trax 300 ATV is a best buy. I bought it used when it was one year old. All I have to do is change the oil and put gas in the tank - and not very often. I use it every day during the pasturing season to build fence, get the cows, go after parts, or drive to another piece of equipment. I mounted a towbar on front so I can pull it behind my pickup or tractor. It's well built. I'd definitely buy another one."

Norman Talbot, Rochester, N.H.: "I'm well pleased with my 1997 **Kiotti** 4-WD trac-

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