

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

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Shelby Britten, Haswell, Colo.: “Our three **Caterpillar** Challenger 85E’s have performed great and are best buys. We had a few minor problems which were covered under warranty by the dealer. These tractors have plenty of lugging power and traction and perform even better than our previous 85C tractors.

“We consistently have had problems with our two **Yamaha** Warrior 4-wheeler ATV’s. When we brought them home, one of them kept cutting out at high end. We weren’t able to trade it off. The second model started doing the same thing. After spending \$1,000 on parts we still haven’t solved the problem.”

John Heidrich, Mandan, N. Dak.: John says his “best buy” is his 1985 **Ford** Escort car which has more than 367,000 miles on it. “I work in construction as a heavy equipment operator. I drove this car 135 miles a day to work round trip for years. The engine has never been opened. All I’ve replaced are the water pump, alternator, and struts. I change the oil every 2,000 miles and it doesn’t use any oil between changes. If car manufacturers made all their cars this good they wouldn’t sell many new ones.”

Greg Silver, Codroy Valley,

on the market and it’s easy to move around. I just throw four or five bales in back of the wheels to make it light enough to lift the front end.

“We have a **Ford** 2000 pickup equipped with a diesel engine. When the weather is real cold I try to park it where I can use a hair dryer to blow into the breather. Using this technique it starts as easy as it does on a hot summer day.”

Alton Neuman, Brookshire, Texas: Alton nominates his 1994 **Ford** F-150 pickup as his “worst buy”. “The electronic overdrive transmission has had problems. The problems happened both under warranty and also after the warranty expired. The engine runs fine and the pickup drives good, but I’ve almost spent enough on repairs to buy a new transmission. We don’t use it hard - it rarely pulls a trailer. It has about 80,000 miles on it.”

Joel and Helen Cowher, Philipsburg, Pa.: “My worst buy is my 1999 **Dodge** Ram 2500 HD 4-WD quad cab pickup. My wife and I recently retired and are now on a limited income. Upon contemplating retirement we agreed to purchase a new vehicle, expecting that it would provide many years of dependable service. Unfortunately, based on its performance during the first 18,000 miles, we won’t be able to afford to keep this vehicle beyond the 36,000-mile warranty period.

“We were delayed in taking delivery by four days because the pickup had two bad wheels. New wheels were ordered but one was bad. We ended up with five different-style wheels that they took off another pickup. Upon taking delivery of the pickup, we were able to drive it only about one mile before one of the ignition coils failed. We’ve also had problems with the ignition coil, fan belt, thermostat gasket, muffler, rear differential, brake rotors, stub axle, rear shock absorbers, steering box, underhood light, neutral switch, valve lifter, and trailer hitch receiver. Braking is poor and the transmission shifts erratically. Also, the whole pickup tends to vibrate at 55 to 65 mph. Our Chrysler dealer acknowledges this problem but says he doesn’t know the cause or the cure.

“In 18 months we’ve had to return it to the dealer 16 times for repairs. We put more than 500 miles on it going back and forth to the dealer, and I don’t think those miles should count against the warranty.

“One of the few enjoyments we can still afford is camping. Unfortunately, the towing performance of this vehicle is so poor that I dread hitching up our camper.

“With a purchase price of \$31,665 and tax of \$1,899, plus \$3,500 worth of accessories, our total cost was \$37,064.90. This is the most expensive mistake we’ve ever made on a vehicle. I’m considering spending an additional \$40 to purchase four 1-ft. sq. magnetic mount lemons in order to demonstrate the true character of this expensive no-go showboat. This vehicle was our first, and most definitely our last, Chrysler product.”

Jack Jacobs, Martin, S. Dak.: “I bought my 1988 **Deere** 4650 MFWD tractor used with 200 hours on it. It’s my best buy. It now has more than 6,400 hours on it and still runs like new. It has needed only a few minor repairs. I really like the front wheel assist and don’t know how I ever got along without it in the past.

“My 1996 **Deere** 8300 MFWD tractor equipped with a 200 hp engine and 16-speed Powershift transmission is a best buy. It performs well and has a quiet cab. My only

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy

Send your nominations to:
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,
Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use
the survey form on our website at
www.FARMSHOW.com,
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Editor@FARMSHOW.com**

Newfoundland: “In 1998 I bought a 1993 **Chevrolet** K-1500 4-WD regular cab pickup equipped with a 4.3-liter, V-6 engine. It had mediocre power and was terrible on fuel. Two months after I bought it the transmission burned up even though I had never worked it hard. I decided to replace the original engine with a 5.7-liter, V-8 diesel out of a 1980 Oldsmobile Delta 88 car that had only about 50,000 miles on it. I also installed a rebuilt 700-R4 automatic transmission, using an adapter plate to fit the new engine properly. Many people have asked me why I didn’t use a common 6.2-liter diesel engine instead of the Olds diesel. The answer is simple. Those 6.2-liter diesel engines tend to crack in the lower end of the block where the main bearing caps bolt into place, and also in the upper main bearing webbing. They’re well known for this problem.

“It took about two weeks to get everything installed properly, but it turned out great. The new engine has impressive power and is fuel efficient. It gets 33 mpg on the highway and 24 mpg around town. Also, it starts well even in the coldest weather. I can’t say enough about how well it performs.

“My brother uses the same engine in his 1979 Chevrolet pickup, which has more than 400,000 miles on it and is still going strong. I wouldn’t hesitate to repower another pickup with this engine.”

Danny Sainovich, Industry, Pa.: A **Farmco** 18-ft. long portable small square bale feeder that mounts on wheels rates as Danny’s “best buy” (Farmco Mfg., Ronks, Pa.). “It cost less than most other bale feeders