

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

conditioner, fuel gauge sending unit, and 3-pt. lift cable. It's hard to believe, but the DEKA batteries in this tractor have been there since 1988."

Byron Ruge, Valparaiso, Ind.: Byron nominates his **Classic** outdoor woodburning stove (Central Boiler, Greenbush, Minn.), as his "best buy". "This is the third heating season I've used it and I'm still impressed with how efficient it is. The company hasn't overrated this stove at all. I have to fill it with wood only once every two days. I use it to heat an old 1,200 sq. ft. farm house with very

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little insulation. It also heats all my hot water. I just finished building a 40 by 70 by 14-ft. workshop and I intend to heat this building with the same stove.

"My **Rawson** 6-row coultter cart for zone-till planting is a best buy. I've been zone-tilling for 11 years now. I don't want to think about all the money and time that I spent on equipment and fuel prior to zone-tilling. I feel that if you approach this system with the right management ideas and commit to making it work, you'll succeed. I have not suffered any net income loss with this system. I may sacrifice a couple of bushels of yield, but I'm much farther ahead income-wise."

Harry O. Tinsley, Radiant, Va.: Harry's the happy owner of a 1999 **Chevrolet** S-10 pickup equipped with a 5-speed transmission with overdrive. "It gets 28 to 30 mpg and has required only routine maintenance. I always change the oil every 3,000 to 4,000 miles. It has 11,000 miles on it."

Richard MacDonald, North Manchester, Ind.: Richard installed a 4-step **SureGrip** non-slip step made by **K&M Mfg.** on his International 1486 tractor. "Along with the hand rail they're adjustable for your step height. Makes it much easier and safer to get in and out of the cab. I also installed a new Case-IH air ride seat, which is very comfortable and adjustable and makes the tractor ride much smoother. I fitted it with **Goodyear** DynaTorque radial tires. They're excellent."

Leo Shinholt, Corriganville, Md.: "Leo's 1989 **Ford** F-250 pickup, equipped with a 7.3-liter International diesel engine and a 5-speed transmission, has about 250,000 miles on it and is still going strong. "It's a wonderful pickup. I use it hard and often pull a gooseneck trailer. I've changed the oil on it every 3,500 to 4,000 miles. Everything on it is original except for the tires, three sets of brakes, one water pump, a fuel pump, and a power steering pump."

On the minus side, he lists his 1999 **Ford** F-250 pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter International turbocharged diesel engine. "The engine works great and the truck is well-designed. However, the 6-speed transmission leaves something to be desired. It's very noisy. The company says these transmissions are just noisy and there's no cure. Not a very satisfying answer."

Claude W. Winters, Eglon, W. Va.: "Our 1997 **Chevrolet** Cheyenne 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a Vortex V-8 engine has been a dream. No problems after 3,700 miles. It can easily pull a low boy trailer loaded with equipment.

"My 1992 **Deere** Gator is one of the great-

est labor savers on the farm. I use it for checking, mending, and building fence, taking tools to the field for repairs, and just for getting around our West Virginia hills. It's also a wonderful toy for our grand kids."

Michael N. Bailey, Lancaster, S.C.: Michael owns a "best buy" **Husqvarna** 672 chain saw equipped with a 20-in. bar. "This is the first saw of this size that I've owned. It has a lot of power which works great for cutting large trees. Overall, I've been pleased with all the Husqvarna equipment I've owned which includes three other saws and a leaf blower.

"I'm not happy with the 7.3-liter International Navistar engine in my 1990 **Ford** F-250 heavy duty pickup. Five months after the warranty expired a head gasket blew, and the same thing happened the next year almost to the day. One year later there was trouble again. This time cracks developed in one of the heads and about half the valve guides were worn out. We thought we fixed it, but right on cue this January the engine started running hot again and with a compression leak into the cooling system. That's four years in a row with a repair bill each time of about \$1,200. All routine oil, filter, and other maintenance has been done by the dealer on schedule. The pickup only has about 82,000 miles on it. I bought this engine because I believed it would be fuel efficient. I learned last year from reading **FARM SHOW** that the engine was a converted gas engine. If I had known this I would never have purchased it. I'd buy another **Ford** pickup, but not one equipped with one of these diesel engines."

Lee Sudman, St. Marys, Ohio: "My **Deere** 345 garden tractor equipped with a trailer/bagger is my best buy. I love the handling ease, quiet running water-cooled engine, and reduced mowing time.

"My 1998 **Deere** 6400 tractor equipped with a cab has a very low noise level in the cab and is equipped with handy, easy-to-use controls. I like some of the little features it has such as step placement, grab bars, etc. My wife says a woman must have had a hand in its design."

Timothy D. Clites, Berlin, Pa.: "My **Gehl** 4625 skid steer loader does everything that I expected it to when I bought it. Very comfortable with responsive controls. It's definitely a best buy."

Galen R. Wenger, Lititz, Pa.: "Our best buy is a 1999 **Deere** 6210 2-WD tractor equipped with a Power Quad transmission. It starts great in cold weather, has a lot of traction, and has plenty of power to get through tough spots.

"Our 1974 **Deere** 4430 tractor is also a best buy. It has more than 8,200 hours on it but just keeps running. Like they say, "Nothing runs like a **Deere**."

D.L. Williamson, Philippi, W. Va.: "I like my 1998 **Deere** 6400 4-WD tractor equipped with a Power Quad shuttle shift transmission, 640 front-end loader, and cab. "It's an excellent loader tractor. I use it mostly to pull a discbine and a baler and to feed my livestock. It has about 1,000 hours and the only problem was a fitting that blew off a hydraulic line. The dealer promptly replaced it. The loader has quick-tach brackets that let me change from one piece of equipment to another in five minutes or less. I use a bale grabber, bale forks, pallet forks, post driver and bucket on the loader. The transmission has a park setting, which I really like."

Jimmy Stephens, Wingo, Ky.: "We've used this tractor for five years with no problems," says Jimmy, pleased with his **Ford New Holland** 8670 front wheel assist tractor. "It has the best transmission of any tractor on the market and is user friendly.

"Our 1997 **Chevrolet** 1500 4-WD pickup is equipped with a 350 cu. in. engine. It has a lot of power and is very fuel efficient."

William Corson, Jr., Newark Valley, N.Y.: William says his 1998 **Honda** Fourtrax 400 ATV is his "best buy". "It's real handy and a good workhorse. We use it on our farm almost every day. It saves a lot of walking.

"Our **Gehl** 1475 round baler makes nice, tight bales.

"Our **Melroe** Bobcat 751 skid steer loader works great and has a grapple fork that works slick on round bales."

Keith E. Haynes, Enoree, S.C.: "Recently there have been 'worst buy' reports in **FARM SHOW** about **Red Wing** shoes. I've always had outstanding service from these shoes. They last about three times longer than the cheaper brand I had been using. The only problem is that they're high priced."

Ray Mabry, Tutwiler, Miss.: Ray's worst buys are his two 1996 **Deere** 8200 tractors. "We had transmission problems from day one and they continued. No one could fix the tractors. Because of the transmission problems we almost lost a crop last year."

Harold R. Stoudt, Hamburg, Pa.: "It's a reliable tractor that's easy to operate and well built," says Harold, happy with his **Kubota** 3350 4-WD tractor equipped with a diesel engine, shuttle shift transmission, and front-end loader. He bought it used. "The diesel engine starts well even in cold weather. The only problem is that the front wheel assist seals leak fluid."

On the negative side, "I purchased my **Ryobi** leaf blower to blow dust out of radiators on tractors, hay balers, etc., as well as to use in the yard. After several hours of use it refused to start. It required ignition work. Disassembling it is a terrible job. Now the carburetor has problems. It needs new parts but they're not available locally."

Harold Harris, Huntington, Ind.: Harold's happy with his 1996 **Deere** 6300

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MFWD tractor equipped with a 640 front-end loader. "The cab is easy to get in and out of and keeps me warm during snow removal. It's a good loader tractor.

"My 1997 **Deere** 717 stalk cutter works good for mowing weeds and road sides."

Rick Wineinger, Salem, Ind.: "My **Zetor** 2-WD 65 hp tractor is my best buy. It's really fuel efficient. Working in hay (mowing, raking and moving round bales), it uses only about one gallon per hour. It has about 600 hours on it. So far, so good."

Perry Hathaway, Claypool, Ind.: "My best buy are **Welty** hay panels which I use to feed round bales to my cattle (Welty Enterprises, 911 East Waterford St., Wakarusa, Ind. 46573 ph 800 628-4728). The panels are available in various lengths and can be tied together at the corners to make a square or rectangle. I used two 16-ft. long panels and one 8-ft. long panel and put them together in

a rectangle shape, with one end open at the fence line. The design eliminates the need for a loader tractor. I simply drive my pickup or truck up to the fence line and roll the bale off. Cows eat from the sides, with very little waste. The panels are well made."

Donald E. Swank, Rossburg, Ohio: "We like our 1996 **Deere** 345 hydrostatic drive garden tractor equipped with a mower and power steering. Before we bought it I often had to ask my wife to help me mow the yard. Now she wants to mow it even when it doesn't need mowing."

Dannie Morris, Hartford City, Ind.: "Our 1996 **Ford** 8870 tractor performs well. It's a best buy."

Tom Small, Walton, Ind.: Tom's impressed with his 1998 **Gleaner** R-72 combine. "Last year I ran an 8-row, 30-in. corn head and a 500 series bean head, and it was the easiest, most trouble-free harvest I've ever experienced. It always produced a good threshing sample. The biggest challenge is being able to use the machine to its full capacity. The cab has great comfort and visibility."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1997 **White** hopper bottom grain trailer. "The axles aren't aligned correctly so the trailer pulls off center. The door openers require a lot of effort, and the wiring on it wasn't standard. Also, the brakes are very sensitive to adjustment. I guess you get what you pay for."

Van Meek, Birmingham, Iowa: "My best buy is an 8-bale trailer built by **A-1 Agri Sales & Service** (1140 Gillan Road & Hwy. 63 South, Moberly, Mo. 65270 ph 660 263-0390). The frame is built of heavy steel pipe and rides on a semi trailer axle with dual 10.00 by 20 wheels. It's nearly indestructible. I can use either a drop pin hitch or a pintle hitch. The 3-pt. bale spear on my tractor has a hook on it. I just back up the tractor and hook onto the hitch, then pick up the trailer and go."

Jim Haines, Bremen, Ind.: Jim likes his 2000 **Toyota** Tundra pickup equipped with a V-8 engine. "This is the third Toyota pickup I've owned. This one rides as well as my Cadillac Deville car and has a lot of power. I couldn't be happier.

"I use my **Deere** 6 by 4 Gator every day on our farm and hunting preserve. It's the most used piece of machinery on our place. We just love it."

Ted Watson, Eriksdale, Manitoba: Ted's the satisfied owner of a 1993 **New Holland** 116 14-ft. Haybine. "It's an all-around terrific haying machine. I've had to replace only two drive chains. I use it to cut all my wild hay as well as my alfalfa."

Phillip Knight, Louisville, Ky.: "My worst buy ever is my **Deere** 5400 tractor which I bought used in 1996 with 125 hours on it. At 922 hours the B range shaft seized to the pinion shaft, and I couldn't get the tractor out of gear. A company representative said there were problems with some of these tractors because they weren't assembled properly at the factory, but wouldn't recall them because there weren't enough complaints. My total cost for repairs was \$4,450. The company agreed to pay only one fourth of the cost."

Michael B. McCormick, Malta, Ohio: "Other than a few minor problems that were taken care of by the dealer, it has been trouble-free," reports Michael about his 1997

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