

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Allen Snodgrass, Vandalia, Mo.: “My 1997 **Deere** 9300 4-WD tractor equipped with a powershift transmission is my worst buy. Every time I push on the clutch the transmission automatically goes to first gear, so I have to shift through all the gears to get to the gear I want. The tractor is equipped with the weights and tire size and pressure recommended by the company, yet ‘wheel hop’ is so bad I often have to stop, which puts the transmission back into first gear again. Another problem is that it shifts rough and jumps and jerks terribly. It had just 28 hours on it when I traded it for a **Caterpillar** Challenger. The Cat is a nice tractor to operate.”

He’s impressed with his 1996 **Dodge** 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and 5-speed transmission. “It has a lot of power and gets 22 mpg on the highway and 14 to 15 mpg pulling a trailer, and it doesn’t use any oil. It rides nice for a 3/4-ton pickup and is a pleasure to drive.”

Dan Petersen, Curtice, Ohio: “My worst buy is my 1994 **Great Plains** 10-ft. no-till grain drill which I bought in the fall of 1995. I like the drill itself - it does a good job of planting, saves time, and results in higher bean yields. I also believe wheat ‘win-ters’ better when it’s planted no-till because it doesn’t ‘heave’ so much in February and March.

2,000 acres before needing replacement.

“I think the company should make sure that its dealers do a better job of prepping these drills. I had to add 1,700 lbs. of weight to the drill so that it will penetrate my dry ground when the drill is one third or less full. I’ll add 400 more lbs. of weight next year.

“All in all this drill is a great piece of machinery. I’d buy another one. But the problem with the opening discs is a good example of how a dealer can give a company a bad name.”

Dan likes his 1995 **Chevrolet** K2500 4-WD pickup. “It’ll pull a 550-bu. grain load with no problem. It gets 13 mpg empty. It’s equipped with a new-style front suspension so it handles much better than older models. The only problem was with a front brake that occasionally wouldn’t fully release. The dealer promptly took care of it.”

Ken Craven, Byars, Okla.: “It’s all I could ever want in a truck for farm use, and more,” says Ken about his 1997 **Dodge** 3500 long wheelbase pickup equipped with a Cummins 3500 diesel engine, 5-speed transmission, and posi traction rear end. “I like it so much I wish we would’ve had it 15 years ago.”

Mark Bennett, Portland, Tenn.: “It cuts like a lawn mower,” says Mark about his ‘best buy’ 1990 **M & W** Pasture Clipper. “I’ve used it on about 4,000 acres and the only problem was when plastic twine got caught in a bottom gearbox reel. My neighbors borrow this machine a lot. I’d highly recommend it to anyone.”

Jim Clark, Sioux City, Iowa: “I’m happy with my 1993 **Case-IH** 1666 Axial-Flow combine. It has a lot of power and uses one gal. per acre less fuel than the **Deere** 9500 combine that I traded in. I also was able to sell my grain cleaner after I got rid of the **Deere** combine.”

Edward Beeler, Hamilton, Ohio: “My 1994 **Ford** 8340 tractor has a lot of power and a powershift transmission that works smooth and easy. This tractor is so nice to drive that I use it for both big and small jobs.”

Alan Stevenson, Ulysses, Kan.: Alan has good things to say about his 1995 **Deere** 9600 combine equipped with a heavy duty front axle and 20.8 by 42 radial dual tires. “It’s an excellent machine that’s comfortable to operate and has had very few maintenance problems. It performs phenomenally in corn and also very well in wheat and milo. I really like the **Deere**-made dual wheels. In row crops the tires stay between the rows, allowing the machine to almost drive itself. The first year we used it we had a wet summer, so when I went to cut wheat I let the air pressure down in the tires to where they were pretty ‘cheeky’ with a load on. However, even with a 30-ft. platform and a full 350 bu. grain tank (it’s equipped with a Mauer tank extension), the combine was able to stay on top of the ground and keep going while I would look around and see my neighbors’ 9600s mired down with their 30.5 by 32 tires. The ground was so wet that my 95-ft. **Deere** 8400 MFWD tractor had trouble pulling even a half-loaded 840 grain cart around.

“I’m also well pleased with the **Deere** 8400 tractor. It’s a real horse.”

Jeff Dittmer, Suisun, Calif.: Jeff’s the owner of a “best buy” **Case-IH** 7230 front wheel assist tractor. “The best thing about it is the dependability. We’ve used it for two years with no problems. It has about the same horsepower as the **Ford** tractor that it replaced but pulls everything easier and smoother. Its better balanced, too, and compacts the soil less than the **Ford** - we can see the differ-

“I bought the drill from a dealer 95 miles away. When I got it home two of the seed-lock wheels had fallen off and were laying on the trailer floor. When I went to use the drill I found that I couldn’t adjust the seed rate because one of the plastic fluted seed metering wheels had been damaged. After fixing that problem I made only three rounds before it quit working because the clutch wouldn’t kick in. I took it apart and found that it was completely dry so I greased it. I made three more rounds, then stopped to check everything and discovered that I had lost two seed-lock wheels and mud scrapers. I went home and spent the rest of the day going over the drill with a fine tooth comb.

“I called the dealer and was told ‘You should always check equipment over when you buy it’. However, he agreed to send me the parts that I had lost in the field. I received them, along with a bill which I didn’t pay.

“When I planted my wheat field last fall I heard a squeaking noise coming from behind me, but the drill was still planting good. When I cleaned it up for winter storage I had my son oil all the discs. After he was done he said, ‘Hey dad, some of those opener discs are pretty loose.’ I checked some of them and found that about half of them were shot.

“The dealer said the company would pay for only 40 percent of the cost because of the age of the drill. However, my drill has only about 600 acres on it because it was almost 2 years old when I bought it as a ‘leftover’ model. And I was told the discs would last