

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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Nancy C. Hainline, Springfield, Mo.: "My 1965 Deere 4020 tractor is my best buy. It had problems with the ignition starter, hydraulics, and radiator. Overall, though, it's my favorite workhorse for work on hills and for hauling big bales. I wish the accelerator shifter wasn't located between the dash and the steering wheel. It can be scary if you accidentally bump it while driving on hillsides.

Sometimes the tractor dies and then the brakes and power steering quit working."

Mahlon Wright, Schuylers Falls, N.Y.: "My 2001 Snapper riding mower is my worst buy. This mower works more like a dozer blade than a mower. It rusted so bad that all the paint fell off. This year the engine started, but then as soon as I let off the brake it stalled. I fixed that problem only to find that once I got the engine going, the mower deck stalled. The only way it would run is if I took the switch out of the socket and let it hang."

Dan Bortolotti, Moss Beach, Calif.: "I use my 1998 Posi-Track ASVHD4520 tractor (www.asvi.com) and Loftness brush mower (ph 800 828-7624; www.loftness.com) in my land clearing business. Both units have performed way above my expectations."

Mark S. Capparella, Alamogordo, N. Mex.: Mark likes his Tornado performance booster which he uses on a pair of Dodge pickups - a 1988 D-250 equipped with a 5.2-liter V-8 engine and a 1995 Dakota equipped with a 3.9-liter, V-6 engine (ph 800 603-4383; in Canada 800 553-1872). "The stainless steel booster installs inside the air intake of electronically fuel-injected vehicles. It creates a swirling motion, forcing air around corners and bends and through intakes. According to the company the product causes your engine to burn fuel cleaner, faster and more completely for greater power and fuel economy. It's said to increase mileage 7 to 24 percent and results in a 4 to 13 hp increase. "This product caused both my vehicles to show improvement in performance and economy. With fuel prices soaring, it's a big help," says Mark.

He also likes his Fuel Boss magnetic fuel saver (ph 800 603-4383; in Canada 800 553-1872; website: www.jcwhitney.com). "It helps my 1963 Chevy run smoother and cleaner," says Mark.

W.M. Goolsby, Auburn, Ala.: He likes Royal Purple synthetic oil (Royal Purple, Ltd., ph 888 382-6300 or 281 354-8600; www.royalpurple.com). "I started using this oil on a trial basis eight years ago in such machines as my truck, tractor, and lawn mower. It has proven itself in lowering friction in both gas and diesel engines. I get better mileage on gas engines and more hours on my tractor cutting brush. Plus, I don't have to change oil as often."

"My 2003 Sears Craftsman leaf blower is my worst buy. It worked okay the first couple of times I used it, but then it started having problems. I always run the gas out of 2-cycle engines before I put them in storage. When I got the blower out to use it last spring, it wouldn't crank. It has only about two hours of running time on it."

Dave Hudson, Springfield, Ill.: "My worst buy was my 2000 Toyota Tundra pickup. I had to spend a lot of money on repairs in the three years that I owned it. The starter went out (\$350); the electric switch for the 4-WD went out (\$365); the horn relay went out. Also, a serpentine belt had to be replaced at a cost of \$70. Of course, these problems all happened right after the warranty expired. The pickup averaged only 15 mpg."

Stanley A. Grimes, Chelsea, Maine:

Stanley likes his 1988 Deere 430 diesel garden tractor. "We use it as a bulldozer, lawn mower, and garden tiller."

Mark Majerle, Los Gatos, Calif.: "I like my 1972 Howard Rotovator walk-behind rototiller equipped with a 360 degree 2-cyl. English engine. It's well built, over engineered, and built strong so it's made to last. They just don't make rototillers like this anymore."

Robert D. Geer, Jr., Ledyard, Ct.: "My Alo Quicke front-end loader is my best buy. I bought it to mount on my Massey Ferguson 263 4-WD tractor. The loader can be taken off or put on in only two to three minutes. It came equipped with a quick tach bucket and optional soft drive that allows the loader arms to 'float' during road travel or field use, easing fatigue on both the tractor and the operator."

Mark Vimont, Independence, Ore.: "My worst buys are 9 by 1/8-in. grinder discs from Grizzly, branded 'CWA' which stands for Camel Wheel Abrasives. This product is made in Israel. The discs visibly wore down while I was cutting a rusty barrel. By contrast, CAI grinder discs made by Enco in Plattsville, Ontario, work great. (Enco, Fernley, Nevada 89408; ph 800 965-5857; www.use-enco.com).

Roger Lamont, Owen Sound, Ontario: Roger nominates his 2000 Deere 6110L 65 hp tractor as his "best buy." "It's my only tractor. I use it to do everything on our farm, plus to do custom work. It always starts easy and has a fast hydraulic flow for loader work. It's also easier to maintain than other tractors I've owned in the past. One problem is that the anti-sway blocks and support hang down 1 1/2 in. lower than the drawbar support and catch on rocks and tree stumps, etc. Lock pins on telescopic draft links are almost impossible to use during the winter for mounting a snowblower. I removed them and made my own more simple locks. Another problem is that it's difficult to see the drawbar from the tractor seat. Also, I wish it shifted more smoothly."

Wayne Dorsett, Kirkland, Wash.: "I just love my Captivator® Fly Trap because it works so well. I've found that it's easy to get the reusable half-gal. jar 2/3 full of flies in about a month. They pack down as time goes by. This product is manufactured by Farnam Horse Products (www.Farnam.com). I used their fly bait paste with water as the attractant. It uses fly pheromones to attract the flies and really works great. It's sure better than chasing them with a fly swatter!"



R.W. Ballard, Show Low, Arizona: "My 2002 Bombardier Sport 650 ATV is my best buy. I bought it used with 44 miles on it. I paid \$8,000 for it and the trailer it was on, plus a small garden cart. It has a lot of power and torque. We use it with a winch to move burned trees as well as boulders, and it never skips a beat. We use it almost every day. It's the best money we've ever spent."

Joe A. Matthews, Logansport, La.: "My 1987 Ford 1710 compact tractor is my best buy. It has never failed to start and keeps going all day long."

James E. Lyce, Laceyville, Penn.: "I like my Hesston 140-90 tractor made by Fiat. This tractor is built heavy, is fuel efficient, easy to operate, and it's also durable. It has more than 7,000 hours on it but still doesn't use any oil."

W. LeClair, Franconia, N.H.: "My

"Life Doesn't Have A Reset Button"

By C.F. Marley, Contributing Editor

My son Joe is a journeyman electrician. It's his observation that electric-powered high pressure washers kill more people than any other electrically driven device.

Joe says there's no excuse for not using an inexpensive device known as a "ground fault circuit interrupter" when using pressure washers and other portable tools.

He recommends one called the "Shock Buster", which is available at most leading hardware stores and sells for under \$10. I took his advice and bought one. As shown in the photo, I plug the Shock Buster into the end of the extension cord and then I plug the pressure washer into the Shock Buster. If there's any kind of problem or short, the GFCI will instantly interrupt the circuit before any damage can be done. Works the same as ground fault interrupts often installed in home circuits.

I plan to use it on any electric-powered tool



"Ground fault circuit interrupter" keeps you safe when using pressure washers and other portable tools.

when used on wet ground or in the snow. It's easy to use and doesn't have any effect on operation at all.

There's a tag line on the Shock Buster package that hit home with me: "Life doesn't have a reset button."

Kubota BS22 lawn tractor equipped with a 60-in. mower deck is my best buy. It runs great and is fuel efficient and easy to maintain. It also does a nice, clean job of cutting grass. It's a durable machine.

"My Woodmizer LT70 sawmill constantly required repairs and is my worst buy. I expected a better product for the \$40,000 I spent on it. Every time I try to use it a new problem comes up."

D. Schneider, St. Joseph, Mo.: "I bought my Deere 7410 MFWF tractor used two years ago and it has been trouble-free. It has a lot of power and is comfortable to drive. It's also fuel efficient."

Bill Miller, Jackson, Miss.: Bill's happy with his 2002 Deere 5420 2-WD, 65 hp tractor. "This is my second Deere 5000 series tractor. My other one was a 5400. The 5420 has an improved operator station which is isolated from the frame. It has a comfortable ride, is easy to operate, is built strong, and has been trouble-free. I've never had a bad experience with a Deere product. I also like my Deere MX10 cutter and a 2003 Deere 4310 MFWF compact utility tractor."

"My 2001 Troy-Bilt 6 hp Econo-Horse tiller is my worst buy. It has less than 10 hours on it. The gearbox pulley and drive gear went out. I also had problems with the carburetor. I put two floats in the carburetor before I finally gave up and installed a complete new carburetor. It's equipped with a Tecumseh engine, but I think another brand would work better."

Coy Woodall, Calvin, Okla.: "My 1973 Ford 5000 tractor has been used, misused, and abused but, like the old Timex watches, it just keeps on ticking. I've spent very little money on it. I wish I could buy a new tractor exactly like this one."

"My 2002 Chevrolet Silverado 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a 6-liter, V-8 engine is my worst buy. It has no pulling power, gets stuck easy, and wanders all over the road."

Rich Vink, Topeka, Kansas: Rich likes his 2001 Deere 445 garden tractor. "In my opinion, the Deere name still stands for dependability and resale value. I've owned four Deeres over the years and will always be a Deere person. This tractor could use improvements to the power steering system, and the 22 hp fuel-injected Kawasaki engine drinks fuel. Another problem is the spark plug boots rub on the engine compartment panels."

Dick Combs, Worth, Mo.: "My Sears Craftsman LED flashlight is my best buy. It's made from stainless steel and rubber and has five bulbs. The 'on' button has three settings - bright, brighter, and brightest. It uses four AA batteries, and the first ones I put in

months ago are still going strong. It's a handy, durable flashlight.

"My Cub Cadet 7254 lawn tractor equipped with a 60-in. mower deck is my worst buy. I first time I started it, the belt came off after I went only about 100 ft. I put the belt back on but the same thing happened again. There have also been other problems."

P. Van Pelt, Rushford, Minn.: "My Rodenator Pro does a great job of getting rid of pocket gophers and woodchucks (Meyer Industries, Midvale, Idaho ph 800 750-4553). I've used it this year on more than 300 acres of hay and beans and have virtu-

"It does a great job of getting rid of gophers and woodchucks."

ally eliminated these critters for good. Dealer service has been great. Two years before I bought the Rodenator I had purchased a Rodex 4000. However, I experienced nothing but mechanical failures with it and also got the run-around from the company. So I traded the Rodex in for the Rodenator Pro and am glad I did."

Charlie Bratton, Albuquerque, N. Mex.: Charlie's impressed with his three Murray MTD riding mowers. "These machines are well-built and easy to maintain. They're equipped with Tecumseh engines which require very little maintenance. Parts for them are readily available."

"I own three Ford Ranger pickups - years 1987, 1996, and 1999 - and they're all best buys. They're dependable, fuel efficient, and well-built."

"My Ryobi 18-volt cordless drill is my worst buy. The problem is that the chuck doesn't hold the bits tight. Also, the batteries lose their charge too soon."

Galen Winger, St. Joseph, Mo.: Galen says he's generally satisfied with his Allis Chalmers D117 Series IV tractor "except for the brakes and the difficulty of installing new brake linings."

Steve Nelson, Winston-Salem, N.C.: Steve likes his Harbor Freight 1-in. SDS rotary hammer drill. "I was installing an automatic lift on my garage door and burned out a 1/2-in. hammer drill. Then I bought the Harbor Freight drill. It does an awesome job, and I was able to buy it on sale for only \$65. I recommend buying a model that both rotates and hammers."

Bradley Moore, Krypton, Ky.: "My 1948