

## 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

### Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy

Send your nominations to:  
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**John and Wendy Myers, Leesburg, Va.:** “Our 2000 Ford Explorer equipped with a 4.0-liter engine is our worst buy. After the initial break-in period, we started using Amsoil synthetic oil in the engine. The engine failed at 35,525 miles, and an oil analysis revealed the presence of antifreeze in the oil. However, Ford wasn’t interested in the cause of the engine failure because we told them we went beyond the normal oil change interval recommended by Ford. They refused to honor the warranty. The Amsoil dealer said their oil wouldn’t have worn out unless an outside problem, such as the antifreeze, made it fail. Amsoil wouldn’t warranty because a factory defect caused the engine to fail.

“At our expense, we replaced the engine with a used one with 1,000 miles on it. I took oil analysis samples from the newer engine and again, they showed antifreeze present in the oil. The 1991 Ford Explorer that we had traded in required adding coolant periodically. So we’ve had three Explorer engines that all possibly leaked antifreeze. We like the Explorer otherwise but will never buy another one. I suggest that anyone who owns an Explorer do an oil analysis before the warranty expires. I also suggest they be cau-

Syncshuttle transmission and a 541 front-end loader operated by a joystick control lever is my best buy. It’s a good utility tractor that works great for loader work and also for pulling my rotary mower. It has plenty of power.”

**JDL Sales and Service, Rt. 2, Box 214, Pittsfield, Ill.:** “Our King Hitter post driver gets a lot of use and is our best buy (Fairbrother Ind. USA Inc., Fort Worth, Texas ph 888 546-4448; [www.fairbrotherind.com](http://www.fairbrotherind.com)).



It’s made in New Zealand. We operate a large elk ranch and also do a lot of custom fencing and construction work. Elk require an 8-ft. high fence and we have many miles of it. We also build a lot of fence for people who raise deer and buffalo. However, I think this machine would also work well for people who just need to keep animals out. Illinois is becoming a wine producing state and fences are needed to keep deer out.”

**Digger O’ Dell, Cuba, Mo.:** A 2003 Yamaha 450 4-WD ATV rates as Digger’s “best buy”. “At 73 years of age I find it increasingly difficult to move my cattle from pasture to pasture. My son finally convinced me to buy this ATV. It’s a real time saver and also saves a lot of wear and tear on my legs. It’s also helpful for doing fencing work and other chores. No problems.”

**Steve Michaels, Morganton, N.C.:** “My United Farm Tools 500 no-till drill is made heavy enough to get the job done and is made to last.

“My Ford 4610 tractor is small enough to be maneuverable yet big enough to do heavy work.”

On the “worst buy” side, he lists his 2003 Radio Shack wireless driveway alarm. “It worked for only about one week, and the guarantee was no good.”

**Rick Mabeus, Winfield, Iowa:** Rick owns a pair of “best buy” Hoelscher 100 hay grapples, one three years old and the other seven. “They pick up 10 small bales at a time and do exactly what they’re supposed to do.

“My Conveyall seed conveyor is my worst buy. It mounts on the side of a gravity wagon and is powered by a Honda gas engine. However, it didn’t work right from day one. I couldn’t operate it for more than 15 minutes before a belt twisted upside down. I called the company but got no help at all.”

**George Koepke, Woodville, Texas:** George is impressed with his Panasonic 12-volt, 2-speed cordless drill. “This drill does a great job driving wood screws. It maintains constant speed regardless of the torque required and has automatic mechanical locks. Turning the chuck from closed to open requires only about three revolutions, and it grips tight without slipping. The drill has an electronic brake and numerous torque settings. The charger works fast and has an automatic shutoff.”

**Richard Schafer, Traer, Iowa:** “My worst buy is my 1999 Deere 425 all-wheel-steer mower equipped with a 60-in. deck. I’ve put only about 200 hours on it but have already had problems with the camshaft and throttle

tious about using any product that extends the time between oil changes, because Ford doesn’t recognize anything other than their own maintenance schedule.”

**John Carson, Sherwood Park, Alberta:** “My two Valmet loader tractors are the best pieces of equipment on my farm. I have a 1999 model with 135 hp and a 1996 model with 95 hp. All I have to do is fuel them up and change the oil once in a while. The 135 hp model has about 2,100 hours on it and the 95 hp model about 3,000 hours. We raise buffalo and use these tractors to do chores around the farm. The hydraulic systems on these tractors work unbelievably well. No breakdowns.”

**Joe Konyndyk, Mancos, Colo.:** “Last year FARM SHOW published a story on a company called Skull Taxidermy in Deer Lodge, Montana, that sells ‘beetle kits’ for cleaning the flesh off wild game skulls, livestock skulls or any other bones people might want to keep (Vol. 27, No. 4). The company sells a starter kit that lets you set up your own ‘dermestid’ beetle colony. They claim that once your colony is well established, the skull of a deer or bear, or the entire skeleton of a small rodent, can be cleaned in less than 24 hours.

“I paid \$67.50 including S&H for the kit and planned to use it to clean the flesh off the head of a buffalo. I got about two dozen small beetles, along with a big wad of cotton and instructions on how to set up a colony of beetles so I’d have enough to clean the skull. They said it would take three months but by then the animal’s head was dried out. I had to freeze the head for 12 hours and then soak it in water. Maybe all that changed the taste because after 48 days the beetles still haven’t cleaned the skull.”

**Tom D. Wilson, Lamona, Wash.:** “My 2003 Deere 5220 tractor equipped with a