

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

are metric and some aren't. As a result you need two sets of wrenches to work on this machine."

Eldon Smith, Sagle, Idaho: "I sold my dairy farm five years ago and am retired now. The last thing I bought, though, was a **Deere 6400** tractor. It runs good and is still used to work the land. The fuel pump was replaced last summer."

Wayne LeClair, Frankestown, N.H.: "My 1997 **Kawasaki Mule 2510** has performed great with no problems. I use chains on the rear tires during the winter which allows me to use the machine all year long.

"My **Milwaukee 14-in.** handheld cut-off saw is my worst buy. The arbor nut easily overtightens during use. Also, the saw's housing broke within the first month of use."

Harry Turner, North Branch, Mich.: "My best buy is a 1965 **Massey Ferguson 300** combine that I bought used last year. This machine runs and threshes grain and soybeans as good as any new machine. We paid \$600 for it.

"Our 1968 **Ford 8000** tractor still runs like new. No problems. We paid \$6,000 for it."

Robert Martin, Bennington, Okla.: "I bought my 1986 **Toyota** pickup used in 1987. It now has more than 230,000 miles on it but is still going strong. Several years ago I mounted a bale spear on the bed and also put heavy duty leaf springs on back so I can haul round bales. It does a great job. No problems so far.

"My 2002 **Rhino TW120** mower is my worst buy. I was able to use it for only a few hours before a gearbox went out on it. The company sent us a new gearbox, but a few days later it went out, too. A mechanic said the gearboxes they used were the wrong ones for that model. The company sent us a new mower but it wasn't long before the driveshaft

broke on it. We had it fixed and now the mower works alright."

Brian McNeice, Brattleboro, Vt.: "I bought my mid 1970's **Kuhn 3-pt.** disc mower used a few years ago and use it for

"A mechanic said the gearboxes they used were the wrong ones for that model."

mowing pasture. I wouldn't part with it. It mows through everything including brambles and heavy burdock and swamp grass at high speeds, and it doesn't seem to mind rocks that much."

Phillip L. White, Murfreesboro, Ark.: "My 2001 **Cyclone Rake** vacuum-powered mulcher is my best buy (Woodland Power Products, Inc., 72 Acton Street, West Haven, Ct. 06516 ph toll free 888 531-7253). It hitches to your riding mower and turns it into an outdoor cleanup machine. The rig is powered by a 5 hp engine and comes with a 200-gal. collector bag and a big 7-in. dia. vacuum hose. The unit is said to provide 10 times the lifting power of mowers, and 5 to 10 times the capacity.

According to the company, dry materials, like leaves and sticks, are reduced 4 to 8 times in volume as they pass first through your mower blades, and then through a 3,500 rpm mulcher unit. You can use the machine to sweep and pulverize leaves or mow tall grass without clogging or stopping. The unit can pick up just about any lawn debris your mower blades can safely handle including sticks, twigs, and pine needles. The rig has a

double-acting hitch design that allows you to steer into and out of tight areas without jackknifing. The unit unloads like a dump truck - all you do is lift and drive away.

"It leaves my lawn looking like a golf course. Pine cones, leaves, and grass clippings are all picked up. I used it last year to make a huge compost pile and have started another one this year.

"My 2001 **New Holland Boomer 4-WD** tractor equipped with a 45 hp engine is a best buy. It's fast and efficient and has power to spare. To go forward or reverse you operate a foot pedal, which is a real time saver. This tractor has a very short turning radius and a deceptively powerful hydraulic system. It's well made and has convenient controls. No problems."

Gilbert A. Wegner, Onaga, Kansas: Gilbert's impressed with his 1977 **Deere 212** garden tractor equipped with a 47-in. mower deck. "It had an engine overhaul 12 years ago but otherwise has performed flawlessly. I've thought about replacing it, but I have yet to find another mower that's made better."

Charles McClenning, Independence, Kansas: "My 1998 **Chevrolet Lumina 4-door** car is my best buy. It has a lot of power and the air conditioner works great. It drives well and the engine doesn't use any oil. We're quite proud of this car."

On the "worst buy" side, he lists his 1984 **Cub Cadet** garden tractor equipped with a 17 hp Kohler engine and hydrostatic transmission. "It has only 864 hours on it, and I haven't used it at all for the past six years. It uses oil like mosquito repellent but the company wouldn't do anything about the problem. Another problem is that the tractor always failed to start. The company wanted \$1,250 to put in a new engine, not including labor. On the positive side, I love the way

this tractor drives, and it has a good hydrostatic transmission. Also, it does a good job of mowing."

Floyd Appelgate, Marshalltown, Iowa: "My **Kubota ZD18F** zero turn riding mower equipped with a diesel engine is my best buy. It has a lot of power. The deck raises hydraulically, which I like, and the controls are all on the right hand side which is important to me as I have a bad left arm. No complaints so far."

Anne and Bob Melchert, Bettendorf, Iowa: "I want to warn your readers about the 2001 **Ford Escape** SUV equipped with a V-6 engine. We really liked ours for the first 48 miles that we drove it, and then we started having problems. We'd be driving along and the vehicle would just stop running. No lights, no power brakes, no power steering - nothing at all. But then it would start back up.

"I took the vehicle back to the dealer and they called a Ford technician in to work on it. The technician called us and said the vehicle was ready to go. However, after I picked it up the same problem started happening again. The company's technicians had this vehicle more often than I did. My dad ran a copy of the Iowa lemon law off the internet and we then sent a registered letter to the company, stating that we no longer wanted this vehicle because it was unsafe to drive. After about one month someone from the company called and in so many words informed me that the problem was all due to my imagination, even though they had tried to fix the vehicle eight different times. We ended up hiring a lawyer, and went six months without having a vehicle to drive.

"After all was said and done, our replacement vehicle ended up costing us \$5,000."

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