

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:
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,
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the survey form on our website at
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Harold Rehauer, Central City, Iowa: “My worst buy is the set of Meg-Mo lawn mower cutting discs that I purchased from **Megli Lawn Care**. I use them on my Dixon 42-in. riding mower. Each disc is fitted with four swivel-mounted blades. They bolt on in place of conventional blades. I met the owner, Roy Megli, at a farm show last year in Madison, Wis. He assured me that his product would surpass the performance of the mower’s original blades so I bought a set for \$149.85 plus S&H.

“After two months of use I found these blades couldn’t keep either the shroud or themselves clean, and they vibrated so badly that I had to replace them with the original blades. I faxed Mr. Megli and told him about my problem and suggested that he might want to refund my money. There was no response. I met him again at the National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, Ky., and again explained my problem with his product. He said that I must have the wrong blades, and that I needed to use the company’s high rise blades. He said that if I sent him the number that was stamped on my blades, he would send me replacement blades. So I optimistically sent him the information but again there

hasn’t been able to do it in six years. I let my neighbor, a fan of Dodge, read Ford’s service bulletin 02-22-7 and his question is, if the chips are on the block and head why wouldn’t they be inside the engine also?

“Ford’s recommendation is to pull the engine before removing the heads so the heads won’t get damaged during removal from the engine. Two dealers I talked to won’t replace the gaskets unless new heads are installed. Labor, two new heads, the gaskets, recharging the air conditioner, etc., put the cost at about \$3,000.

“When I called Ford and filed a complaint, I asked why they sent pickups out knowing they had defects in them. Their reply was that it doesn’t make any difference if the pickups leave the factory with defects because if they fail during the warranty (three years or 36,000 miles) they’ll fix it - after that it’s the owner’s problem. This is how Ford expects to reach their goal of 100 percent customer satisfaction. My position is if the truck leaves the factory with defects, Ford should fix it, under warranty or not under warranty.

“The people at Ford think they can send their pickups out with defects in them and after the owners get stuck with a huge repair bill they’ll buy another one of their junkers. Not me, I’ve been driving Ford trucks since May 1967 but I wouldn’t buy another one if they were having a two-for-one sale. Besides, if you pay \$30,000 for a pickup and it can’t run more than 45,000 miles, why would you want another one?”

Robert C. Hudson, Halifax, Va.: “I’m well pleased with my 1997 **Ford F-250** pickup equipped with a Power Stroke engine. It has more than 124,000 miles on it with no problems. It spent 75 percent of those miles towing loads, yet it has needed only one front-end alignment.”

Ken and Phyllis Groves, Ireland, W. Va.: “My 1991 **Chevrolet S10** pickup has more than 270,000 miles on it but is still going strong. No problems.

“My 2000**DR** push trimmer equipped with a 6 hp engine is my worst buy. It doesn’t work nearly as well as advertised. Parts on it continually break, including string heads and height spacers, etc. My wife wanted the trimmer because it’s supposed to be easy to use, but she can’t even use it at all. Even I have trouble keeping it running straight. It sure wasn’t worth the \$900 I spent on it.”

Howard Cigelske, Beaver Dam, Wis.: “My **Sears Craftsman** 18-volt cordless 3/8-in. drill-driver is my best buy. It has a lot more power than the 9-volt model I had previously owned. The chuck works good, and the reverse button doesn’t get in the way of the trigger grip.

“My 1946 **Miller** 150-amp welder is a best buy. It has worked well all these years with no problems. I replaced the cables only once.”

Mark Hupfer, Kewaskum, Wis.: Mark likes his **Stanley** retractable key chain. “I tried several other key chains but either the links or spring would break in no time. This model has a nylon string and has been trouble-free for nine years.”

Ernie Fast, Saskatoon, Sask.: “Our **Kubota T1570** riding mower is a much better mower than any other brand we’ve tried. It directs more of its power to the cutting mechanism, and the hydrostatic transmission is terrific.”

William Clark, Isabella, Manitoba: “I’m happy with my 1992 **Deere 9600** combine which I use on our 2,300 acres. This machine has a lot of capacity and is well built. Very little downtime. It’s a pleasure to operate.

“I was disappointed with my 1996 **New Idea 4865** round baler. The company used splined bearings on all the rollers, which caused nothing but trouble and usually ruined the rollers as well. I finally traded the baler in for a **New Holland 688**.”

was no response. I don’t recommend this product or manufacturer to anyone. They have a badly designed product and no service.”

Kent Cartwright, Genoa, Nevada: Kent nominates **PB Blaster** penetrating oil as his “best buy” (ph 800 826-8563 or email: sales@mfgsupply.com). It’s a concentrated penetrant that frees rusted or frozen parts by releasing the surface tension that causes parts to stick. It also lubricates to protect against future rust and corrosion. “Over the years I’ve tried most of the other penetrating oil products on the market, as I’m always bringing home some very rusted machine that needs a little repair.”

Ray L. Combe, Paradise, Utah: “My **Ford 1210** tractor equipped with a front-end loader and backhoe is a best buy. I bought it used 10 years ago and it has saved me a lot of work. I use it around our yard to plant trees and do other small jobs. It still runs good and has a lot of power for its size. It’s also easy on fuel and small enough to get in tight places. I also use this tractor to do some work for my neighbors.

“My 1999 **Ford F-150 4-WD** pickup equipped with a 5.4-liter engine is my worst buy. At about 45,000 miles the right cylinder head gasket started leaking oil at the rear of the engine. I talked to six service managers at Ford dealers in northern Utah and southern Idaho and learned that this leakage is a common problem in the 4.6 and 5.4-liter engines. It’s caused by shoddy work in the manufacturing process. Metal chips left on the block or head aren’t cleaned off and when the head gasket is installed, the chips keep the gasket from sealing and in some cases damage the head. The oil leak is usually at the right rear, left front or both heads on the engine. How hard is it to clean the head and block before the engine is assembled? Ford