

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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Joseph Berto, White City, Ore.: “There’s no way I can adequately express the disgust I have for my 2001 **Toro** 268 Hydro lawn tractor. This \$5,000 machine is the biggest piece of junk I’ve ever owned. The problems with it started just five hours after I bought it, and continued right to the end. The unit was unbelievably noisy (110 decibels) and did a terrible job mowing. But worst of all, parts on it continually broke. Belts broke, valves came out of adjustment, bearings and shafts exploded, the steering wore out, the starter froze - the list goes on and on. When I called the factory they were no help, saying it was the fault of whomever they buy their parts from. This noisy, poor-performing, lousy-cutting, uncomfortable mower should be at the bottom of anyone’s list. I’d rather push a mower than ever ride on a Toro product again.”

Floyd Keller, Osage, Sask.: “My 1967 **Deutz** 40 tractor is my best buy. I call it my little German girl. I’ve used this 40 hp tractor a lot over the years but it has never required any repairs. I use it to pull a small square baler and to plant, cultivate, and hill potatoes. I paid \$4,300 for it, but I wouldn’t sell it for that price today.”

John Kustka, Green Bay, Wis.: “My

same size as the New Holland model but makes much heavier bales.”

Andy Anderson, Storden, Minn.: “We like our 1994 **Dodge** Ram 2500 pickup equipped with a 5.9-liter, 360 cu. in. engine. We bought it used last year and use it mainly to pull trailers. It has performed even better than we expected. We replaced the front shocks, but otherwise it has required only routine maintenance. When we traded up we’ll more than likely buy a Dodge with a Cummins diesel engine and manual transmission.”

Bruce A. Putnam, Charlestown, N.H.: “It’s a well built, high-capacity machine with a cab that offers great visibility,” says Bruce, pleased with his 1998 **Claas** 860 self-propelled chopper. “The company provides good support. We had a few problems with the chopper, but the company representative came out with the dealer and actually helped work on the machine. I appreciate how the company helped me get the machine up and running.”

On the “worst buy” side, he lists his **Kuhn** Alterna 400 mower and **Kuhn** 7200 hay rake. “We’ve had a lot of problems with the mower. We had to install new cutterbars because the machine’s poor flotation caused them to bend. The rake keeps breaking arms or bending them - a problem that we also had with the Kuhn 6000 model that we owned previously. Also, the machine’s slip clutch failed just after the one-year warranty expired. The dealer contacted the company about these problems, but the company rep told him he had already visited us once and wasn’t coming back. We’ll never buy equipment from Kuhn again.”

Ashley Grimes, Faison, N.C.: “My 2000 **Deere** 325 lawn tractor handles well and turns short, and the engine is evenly matched with the mower deck. It’s a comfortable machine to operate and is my best buy.

“My 1999 **Chevrolet** 1500 pickup is my worst buy. It has had a long list of problems. All the windows have had to be replaced; the engine leaked oil out of the valve covers; the transmission had to be replaced at only 60,000 miles; the driveshaft went bad; the driver’s seat broke when the pickup was still brand new; and the back seat supports had to be replaced. Also, the engine tends to stall whenever I start moving the pickup forward.”

Victor Doubek, Albany, Minn.: Victor is disappointed with his 1999 **Smith Power** Pro 75-amp plasma cutter. “I was able to use it only for about 15 or 20 minutes before it quit working. I sent the unit back to the company four times for repairs and had to pay the postage. However, they never did get it to work right. The 2-year warranty was about to expire so I traded this piece of junk in for a Cutmaster 80 XL model sold by **Thermal Dynamics**. I’ve used it for about a year and it has been trouble-free.”

Nelson B. Davis, Bellville, Texas: Nelson nominates his 2001 **Ford** F-250 4-WD, extended cab, shortbed pickup as his “best buy”. It’s equipped with an 8-cyl. gas engine and has a 4:10 ratio rear axle. “I’m pleased with how this pickup performs. It has a lot of power and a real comfortable ride.”

Alan Rushforth, Bryn Mawr, Penn.: Alan likes his 1997 **Allmand** 25 hp compact backhoe. “I bought it used after I had a lot of problems with two other backhoe brands. It weighs only about 3,500 lbs. but is a real workhorse. It outperforms machines that weigh twice as much and also aren’t as well designed.”

Frank Pecsek, Virginia Beach, Va.: “I like my 1997 **Cub Cadet** 2135 garden tractor

1997 **DeWalt** 12-volt cordless drill equipped with an extended range battery is my best buy. I’ve used it to drill thousands of holes and to turn tens of thousands of screws, including big 3-in. deck screws. The drill is lightweight, yet has a lot of power. The batteries last a long time and recharge in only about 45 minutes. It’s a tough, durable, dependable shop tool.

“My 1996 **Dodge** Ram 2500 4-WD pickup is my worst buy. The transmission burned up at about 40,000 miles, and the dealer took it apart to determine the cause of failure. He found that the pump seals had failed, blocking lubrication to the transmission. The company wouldn’t stand behind its product. In addition, I was treated rudely by their customer service rep. Less than a year later I had to replace all the bearings in the pickup’s rear axle. Both the transmission and bearing failures were due to poor quality parts.”

Alan Lucas, Marion, Mich.: A 1999 **Jay-Lor** feed mixer rates as Alan’s “best buy”. “I use it to blend a mixture of high moisture round bales and grain which I feed to my dairy cows and heifers. The unit cuts the bales into pieces and then mixes them with the grain. It doesn’t require a lot of power and is built to last. I feel it has improved our herd’s milk production and health.

“My 2001 **Deere** 457 Silage Special round baler is a best buy. We bale most of our hay as low moisture silage. I had been using a New Holland 644 but had problems with the pickup head plugging up. Also, the bales had soft cores and would flatten out which made them hard to handle. The Deere baler is the