

Best & Worst Buys

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It's equipped with live pto, power steering, wet brakes, full instrument panel, differential lock, and 9-speed transmission. The big 4-cylinder engine has lots of power."

Tommy also likes his 1981 Ford 7700 tractor which he uses to pull a 6-row 30-in. sod planter. "The cab is superior to other brands."

David Batker, Brooklyn, Wis.: "It's powerful and has good transmission gear ranges," reports David, pleased with his 1989 Dodge W350 4-WD pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and 4-speed transmission. It replaced a 1985 Ford equipped with a 460 cu. in. gas engine. "We use it to pull corn wagons weighing 12,000 lbs. It gets 16 mpg loaded and 22 mpg empty which sure beats the Ford's 7 to 11 mpg."

David's "worst buy" is his 1989 Makita 6093D cordless drill. "The battery pack goes dead after about 5 min. of use. If we didn't alternate two batteries it would be virtually useless. It also has less torque than Black & Decker's cordless drill."

Jack Rarig, Catawissa, Penn.: "Wood cutting is an easy all-day job with our 1989 Stihl 028 Wood Boss Super chain saw," says Jack. "It's lightweight, quiet, uses very little fuel, and is equipped with a chain brake and low-kickback bar and chain. Starts even in 20° below temperatures."

Jack's "worst buy" is his 1988 Massey Ferguson 220 square baler. "The knotters stopped cutting twine on the 10th to 15th bale, but we didn't notice the problem until we saw 50 to 100 ft. of twine trailing behind the baler, attached to the last tied bale. It misses 2 or 3 bales each time this way. Our dealer can't solve the problem. Glad I didn't trade my old New Holland baler."

David Nesjan, New Auburn, Wis.: A hydraulically driven post hole auger from Arps Mfg. (New Amerquip Corp., New Holstein, Wis.) rates as David's "best buy". "It's the cat's meow for digging holes in stoney ground and works much better than any pto-driven auger."

Charles Phillips, McDonald, Tenn.: Charles is satisfied with his 1989 New Holland 848 round baler. "The bales are sized

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so that I can carry them two wide on my trailer and still be road legal."

Charles's 1989 Ford F-800 diesel truck "has plenty of power and gets good mileage."

His "worst buy" is his 1985 Lincoln Continental 4-door car. "It vibrated badly from the start. The dealer replaced the axles and drive shaft, but the car still vibrated so bad that the cruise control went out. I wanted to trade the car in, but the dealer said it had almost no resale value."

Brian Klapak, Warren, Ohio: "My 1989 Deutz-Allis 5-shank minimum tillage chisel plow does a great job in heavy trash."

"My 1988 Kinze series II 4-row corn planter plants evenly and is also a best buy."

Francis Vereker, Liberty, Ind.: "I like its fuel economy and ease of handling," says Francis, happy owner of a 1987 Case-IH 485 tractor and loader.

William Jones, Pickett, Wis.: His "worst buy" is his 1986 Chevrolet Caprice station wagon. "At 80,000 miles the car's electric brakes failed and would've cost \$700 to replace. I installed a conventional brake system that cost only \$250."

Robert Winters, Strasburg, Penn.: "My 1989 Ford F-150 4-WD pickup handles well, but gets only 10 to 12 mpg."

William Davis, Sheridan, Ind.: "My 1986 Sunflower 1132 32-ft. disk does a good job of leveling and covers areas fast."

Bertram Willett, Paducah, Kentucky: "It does an excellent job except that it's difficult to dry grain to the exact moisture we want," says Bertram about his Shivers Circulator-2 drying system. "We recently added a Generation II Comp-U-Dry that's computer controlled and dries by moisture rather than by heat. It increases our drying capacity and prevents costly overdrying. It makes adjustments every 5 min. and a print-out provides details of each moisture test."

"Our Deere 4850 tractor equipped with front wheel assist is powerful, fuel efficient, and a pleasure to operate."

M.R. Fuls, Fredericksburg, Va.: His "best buy" is a 1989 Hiniker 5000 no-till/ridge-till cultivator. "In 1989 we no-till planted corn and soybeans in 30-in. rows into a clover/wheat cover crop. We rotary hoed once and cultivated twice, the second time with the ridging attachment. The cultivator handled the cover crop without plugging. We didn't use any herbicides on corn in 1989."

Charlie Harant, Caldwell, Kan.: Charlie's "worst buy" is his 1988 Ford F-150 pickup. "The air conditioner smelled so bad that the pickup wasn't fit to ride in. The dealer tried repairing it at least six times under warranty, but couldn't. I traded it in for a Chevrolet."

Dennis Wagner, Gilmore City, Iowa: "I've had very few problems with my Deere 9600 combine on 2,500 acres. We're very happy with this best buy."

Virgil Johnson, Sac City, Iowa: In 1989 Virgil purchased a new 2855 Woods mower equipped with a snowblower attachment. It's a "worst buy". "As a mower it works great. But when the temperature drops to freezing the engine controls, choke, and switches freeze up. But that really doesn't matter because the engine won't start anyway when it's cold."

M.G. Headley, Angola, Ind.: "It's the best handling and riding truck I've ever owned and gets 18 to 22 mpg depending on the load," says M.G., owner of a 1988 Chevrolet 2500 diesel pickup with 52,000 miles.

He says his Calc An Acre from Micro-Trak Systems "comes in handy for measuring setaside plots and for calculating speed and acres worked."

Lyle Oakes, Montrose, Penn.: "My Oldsmobile Calais is a best buy. The 'quad 4' engine has awesome power and the 24 mpg is much higher than advertised."

Larry Peebler, Rudyard, Mont.: "My 1979 Chevrolet 150 4-WD 1/2-ton pickup is the worst piece of junk I've ever owned. It gets only 6 to 10 mpg and uses lots of oil.

I've never used the pickup hard, but at 20,000 miles it started using a quart of oil every 500 miles. The company said that wasn't abnormally high oil consumption. Now at 65,000 miles it uses 4 to 5 quarts every 2,000 miles. The paint job is poor and the chrome trim moldings don't line up."

Sam Land, South Hill, Va.: Sam's the pleased owner of a 1988 Deere 318 lawn tractor and 47-in. mower. "It's trouble-free and so easy to handle that all my neighbors want to borrow it."

Gene Stout, Elizabethtown, Ind.: "My best buy is my 1990 Polaris Trail Boss 4-WD ATV. I've used it almost every day to cut wood, to clean fence rows and ditch banks, and to pull a trailer while gleaning

"It's trouble-free and so easy to handle that all my neighbors want to borrow it."

corn fields. It's trouble-free and economical. I made a tool box for the front rack to carry fuel, chain saws, and axes."

Gene says another "best buy" is his 1988 Bush Hog 2615 15-ft. flex wing rotary cutter. "I use it to mow road sides, creek banks, drainage ditches, corn stalks, and pastures. It leaves pastures looking like lawns and does an excellent job of mowing over rough terrain. The wings can be raised or lowered for use on roadsides and ditch banks, and I can sharpen the blades without removing them."

"My Craftsman 2.3 cu. in. chain saw equipped with a 16 in. low-kick guide bar is a worst buy. I use it only to trim fruit trees and wood after trees have been cut down, but last fall it quit running. The cylinder came loose and damaged internal parts beyond repair. I had to junk it."

Lyle Olson, Eureka, Kan.: "Last year I installed a model M3 A-G Fish carburetor in my Ford F-150 pickup. The 460 cu. in. engine previously got 9 or 10 mpg. Now it gets 14 or 15 mpg."

Paul Hoffman, New Ulm, Minn.: "Our worst buy ever was a Last Perch sparrow trap. We've owned this trap for about 4 years and are still waiting for it to catch a sparrow. We tried hanging it high and low and placing feed in it, but nothing worked."

On the positive side, "Our New Holland 499 pivot tongue haybine is a best buy. We've used it to cut more than 1,000 acres without a stitch of trouble. We like the adjustable windrow width, pivot tongue, double sickle drive, and intermeshing chevron roll conditioner."

Lyman Goucher, Imnaha, Ore.: "My worst buy is a large square baler made by Agropak and featured in the 1988 edition of "Best of Farm Show." I purchased one for \$19,995 and it quit working the day after the Agropak representative left my farm. Agropak sent another representative out, but he couldn't get it to bale at all. Last fall I received a letter informing me that Agropak was no longer in business. Now I have a \$20,000 baler just sitting in my yard. I hope you print this letter to warn readers about the risk of buying a new product without first trying it out."

P.A. Lovejoy, Elizabeth, Penn.: "My 1988 Deere 2155 tractor is maneuverable, reliable, and thrifty. I do more work with it one week than I did in one month with any previous tractor."

Edwin Rissler, New Enterprise, Penn.:

A Honda rear tine tiller rates as Edwin's "best buy". "I'm totally sold on Honda air-cooled engines. Even a small lawn mower engine purrs like a large engine. Why Briggs & Stratton hasn't built something similar is beyond me."

Rick Meurer, Nicollet, Minn.: Rick is the happy owner of a 1989 Melroe 642-B Bobcat skid steer loader. "The Mitsubishi engine runs smooth and quiet and has plenty of power. I had a 610 Bobcat that lasted 14 years and 2,800 hours with no major engine work, but I think this model is even better."

Rick's "worst buy" is his 1984 Buick Century equipped with a 4.3 liter diesel engine. "It's a real lemon. The power antenna motor burned out and I've repaired the injection pump four times, installed a shut-off valve in the fuel line so fuel wouldn't drain back into the tank, replaced the alternator, water pump, struts, electric fuel pump, and windshield washer motor. I also had to grind the valves, replace the valve guides, shave the heads, and install new main bearings and rod bearings. I did all of this before the car had 70,000 miles."

Paul Hawbaker, Waynesboro, Penn.: Paul says his "best buy" is his Buckeye front-mount 3-pt. hitch (Buckeye Tractor Co., P.O. Box 123, Columbus, Ohio 45830). "I use it to push a cultivator ahead of my tractor. Makes it easy to stay on the row."

Irwin Auman, Lebanon, Penn.: Irwin's "worst buy" is his 1989 Kubota F2400 front mount riding mower equipped with a 72-in. wide cutting deck. "It doesn't cut uniformly. The deck is gauged at the rear by the tractor wheels. There should be a full width roller at the rear so the deck would float independently of the tractor. The two small tires in front of the mower hold so little air that they require a lot of checking. The cruise control is poorly engineered, and 4-WD tears up sod on tight turns."

Otto Smith, Columbus, Ohio: "My 1989 New Idea S209 discbine allows me to cut hay faster than a haybine without plugging, and there are no guards or knives to break down. I can switch from cutting position to towing position in seconds."

Robin James, Laurel, Del.: "It makes nice bales under all conditions and hardly ever misses a tie," reports Robin, owner of a 1988 Case-IH 8540 baler. "Bale uniformity is important to us because we pick up all of our bales with an automatic bale wagon."

Bill Corson, Jr., Newark Valley, N.Y.: Bill likes his New Holland 411 discbine and 570 baler equipped with a bale thrower. "It makes tight uniform bales."

"Our Kelly Ryan 8-ft. bagger makes uniform bags of silage."

Aubrey Worthington, Havre De Grace, Md.: A 1988 GM 1-ton 4-WD pickup rates as Aubrey's "worst buy". "It needed a new flywheel and starter at 21,000 miles and a front-end alignment at 30,000 miles. Numerous other parts had to be replaced. The electric axle lock is a problem. For example, when you back pickup and trailer up to a barn in mud and shut off the engine, then take off again, you spin the front wheels which causes damage to the front lock. The 350 cu. in. engine overheats. We've had both heads repaired, but the engine still boils water back into the plastic reservoir tank so fast that it blows the lid off."

Aubrey's "best buy" is a Deere 1508 fold-up rotary mower. "It's easy to operate and equipped with safety latches so that the mower can't be folded up while operating. Solid tires are a plus. However, the blades could last longer and the fixture to transport the jack needs a little work."