

Best & Worst Buys

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burns a small amount of wood for the job it does. It's clean and easy to keep filled with wood."

Ed Primus, St. Cloud, Minn.: "My 'best buy' Aqua Therm 140FA furnace produces a different kind of heat which keeps our house a lot warmer than gas furnace heat, no matter how often the gas furnace kicks in."

Myles Hollowell, Fremont, Mich.: A Hesston 1091 mower conditioner is his "worst buy". "This rig does a poor job of windrowing light hay although we tried adding a speed-up kit to it. Also, the bearings at the ends of the conditioning rollers are wearing on the roller shafts, even though the bearings are still good."

Mike Volk, Selfridge, N. Dak.: "My 1983 Krause 2206 Rock Flex tandem disk does an excellent job and is built with excellent bearings. It handles trash and rocks well and leaves a well-prepared level seed bed."

Gordon Nelson, Swanville, Minn.: Gordon likes his 1987 Ford Taurus. "It's gone 48,000 miles without a hitch and gets 34 mpg on 10% ethanol fuel and 29 to 30 mpg on unleaded gas. But if I could do it over I wouldn't buy the extended warranty."

On the negative side, Gordon is unhappy with his Deere 1010 utility tractor and loader. "The tractor doesn't have enough hydraulic capacity to operate the loader, and I can't find a higher output pump that fits the tractor's spline coupling. The tractor doesn't have live pto so I can't add a pto pump. If anyone knows of a bigger pump or adapter I'd like to hear from them."

Alfred Porubsky, Bannister, Mich.: "It's a good handling tractor with plenty of power and good fuel economy," says Alfred, who nevertheless has had problems with his 1980 Case 4490. "We've had trouble from day one with the hydraulic system and steering. The power shift went out after only

Jerry Dunn, Bruce, Mississippi: "My worst buy is my 1988 Deere 9930 cotton picker. It uses too much oil, the doors plug up, the monitors don't work, the transmission jumps out of gear, it starts hard and the header doesn't work right."

Dennis Girtler, Winona, Minn.: "It has all the power I need and lets me carry 800-lb. round bales," says Dennis about his "best buy" 1988 Gehl 3310 skid steer loader. "It also costs less than other brands."

Dennis is disappointed with his 1987 New Idea 362 manure spreader. "The gearbox was reworked in 1987 but by last spring it was back in the repair shop."

John Wepler, Lewis, Iowa: John's "worst buy" is his 1982 Ford EXP pickup. "The aluminum water pump bearings seized and broke the timing belt pistons, bending the valves and cracking the head. A recall could have prevented this mess."

On the "best buy" side, John nominates his 1988 Chevrolet 3500 pickup equipped with a 454 engine. "It handles and tows well."

Grady Pearson, Lewisburg, Tenn.: Grady's disappointed with his 1987 Chevrolet S-10 Blazer. "The 2.8 liter V-6 engine doesn't have enough power to adequately pull the vehicle in overdrive or in any other gear except first. Towing is out of the question. The rig rattles and the brakes pulse when I stop even though I had the drums and

rotors turned. I hope the 4.3 liter engine that came out in 1988 runs better."

Grady likes his 1985 Snapper 30-in. cut, 8 hp lawn mower. "I have a big yard and mow about a half mile along my road where I really should use a Bush Hog. It's tough mowing and kind of rocky, but my Snapper always does the job. It has never broken down - only an occasional flat tire caused by a thorn."

Alfred Tuma, Pocahontas, Iowa: Alfred is happy with his 1985 Neuro model 800 Grain Vac grain conveyor. "It sets up easily, eliminates shovel work, and is safer than a sweep auger."

Michael Rush, Deville, La.: "There's no other machine in its class," reports Michael, a commercial hay cutter who's pleased with his 1987 New Holland 411 disc mower-conditioner. "My 411 cuts hay so easily my wife can use it. I'm well satisfied with its performance."

Joe Thompson, Stirling, Ontario: "My worst buy is my 1988 Dodge 250 pickup equipped with a 360 engine and posi-traction rear end. I bought the pickup in June. By October the rear end had been replaced twice. The automatic transmission slips, and when I try to engage the transmission it jumps just like a clutch does when you let it out quickly."

Ken Lissel, Dafeo, Sask.: Ken's "best buy" is his Wheatheart hydraulic auger transport which he uses to transport a 45-ft. long, 7 in. dia. auger. "It lets me move the auger when it's full of grain with very little effort even through 4 in. of snow. No more strong arming grain augers."

Allan Gibson, Sangudo, Alberta: "This tractor is the most trouble-free one I've ever owned," reports Allan, pleased with his

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Versatile 875. "It's easy to service and pulls steady up and down hills. It has a quiet cab, good hydraulics, and power to spare."

Les Miller, Nashville, Ga.: "This is the worst lawn mower I've ever owned," says Les, owner of a 1987 International 482 lawn mower. "Three months after I bought this mower I had to replace the engine, then two weeks later I had to replace the clutch. The mower vibrates badly, uses oil and smokes a lot."

Earl Stickford, Garnavillo, Iowa: "This pickup is by far the most trouble-free one I've ever owned," reports Earl, pleased with his 1988 Nissan pickup. "It drives like a dream and is built with truly fine American skill and craftsmanship. I've had absolutely no problems with it."

Jim Drennen, Sterling, Ky.: Jim's "worst buy" is a Troy-Bilt rotary tiller. "The Tecumseh engine uses oil and smoked from day one, but the factory assured me things would improve. The motor had less than seven hours when the connecting rod broke and locked up, but the factory refused to do anything about it. Another drawback is that I have to replace the overpriced drive

belt at least every year."

Harry Christofferson, Nichols, Iowa: Harry is happy with his 1989 Chevrolet 500 series 4-WD pickup. "It pulls my 20-ft. gooseneck trailer like a dream and rides and handles like a Cadillac."

Harry's "worst buy" is a 1988 Woods model 84 rotary mower. "What a disap-

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pointment. You have to be a magician to hook up to this mower. The engineer who designed the hitch must have hated farmers. Don't manufacturers know that 90% of farmers today use a quick-hitch on their 3-pt. equipment?"

Karren Boguslawski, Jerome, Idaho: Karren's "worst buy" is a 1988 Chevrolet 4-WD 1/2-ton pickup. "It's so tiny that just putting your boots on it can dent it. The alternator went haywire at 20,000 miles, and dealers don't stock replacements."

Steve Dahlman, Power, Mont.: Steve's "worst buy" is his 1984 Adja paint spray marker. "It doesn't leave a mark that we can see in the field, no matter what color we use. About the only thing it does is add color to our pickup-mounted sprayers. Half the time we're pushing the override button so it'll operate. The pressure switches on the accumulator have to be replaced frequently. We had to rebuild both marker tanks after they broke off the main frame."

Hardies & Sons, Hillman, Mich.: "Our Case-IH 4600 Vibra Shank field cultivator pulls smooth and straight and rarely plugs up. It works good for minimum till and finishing work."

Philip Brett, Orangeville, Ontario: Philip likes his 1986 Honda Accord. "We've driven it for three years without one problem, not even a burned out light bulb."

"Another best buy is our Deere 430 round baler. We've used it to make thousands of custom bales and it works excellent."

Charlotte Hausler, Markdale, Ontario: Charlotte's "best buy" is a 1986 Belarus 611 tractor. "Great value for the money. I like the power, fuel efficiency, easy start-up and maintenance, and dealer service."

Henry Musch, Revillo, S. Dak.: "My worst buy is my 1988 Ford X-L 150 pickup. The transmission went out with only 4,000

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Harvey Wheeler, Ovid, Mich.: Harvey is pleased with his 1987 Bush Hog flail mower, model FM 60-01. "We bought it for clipping pastures and roadsides, but it cuts so smooth that we also use it on our lawn instead of our riding lawn mower. It doesn't throw stones like a rotary mower."

Paul Bear, Trenton, Ohio: "Our 1986

Deere 7720 Titan II combine offers exceptional capacity, easy operation, and quick changeover from beans to corn. It has good flotation in wet fields and is comfortable to operate all year long."

John Molitor, Jr., Payne, Ohio: A 1985 New Idea 717 combine equipped with a 1973 703 power unit is John's "best buy". "Our old New Idea combine was 18 years old and starting to wear out so we purchased the 717 combine. It has more capacity. We bought the 703 power unit with only 200 hours on it and put the combine and power unit together. We've used this combine for two years now without any repairs. It might not be as big as some combines, but it sure does the job for us."

On the negative side, John is disappointed with his 1986 New Idea double frame 8-row narrow planter. "I use it to plant both corn and beans. I had planted only about 400 acres over three years when I checked the double disc row planter bearings for wear. Half of the bearings were ruined and others were starting to go. I ended up replacing all the bearings and bearing cups at my own cost."

Jim Walls, Duncan, Okla.: A 1988 New Holland 463 disc mower ranks as Jim's "best buy". "It lets me cut any type of grass as well as all crops. I haven't had any problems with it even while cutting grass that averaged five 6-ft. round bales per acre."

Eric Averwater, Batavia, Ohio: "It takes only 2 min. to fold and unfold the two outside rakes," reports Eric, pleased with his 1986 New Holland 162 17-ft. hay tedder. "This tedder turns over heavy cuttings like no other machine and really shines in windrows that have been rained on. It scatters the windrow out like it had never been raked. I can ted as fast as I can control the tractor."

Bill Hesse, Cedar Falls, Iowa: Bill has had good luck with his Deere 960 field cultivator. "The heavy frame allows me to mount a 400-gal. tank on the cultivator instead of having to mount saddle tanks on the tractor. It leaves a perfect seedbed and depth control is easy to maintain. Plugging is hardly ever a problem."

Tony Thames, Monticello, Miss.: Tony isn't pleased with his 1988 New Idea 5408 disc mower. "The mower cuts fine, but two main shafts broke. The driveshaft going into the gearbox broke and was repaired. Then after five hours of use the shaft connecting the pto shaft and drive pulley broke. New Idea repaired both shafts under warranty."

Ivan Miller, Kalona, Iowa: Ivan's "best buy" is his 1988 Mirafont energy-free hog waterer. "When we purchased this waterer we were a little skeptical, but now we're completely sold on it. It has never frozen up even in below-zero weather. The nicest part is that we don't have to pay for electricity to keep it from freezing."

Dick Williamson, Orchard, Neb.: "My 1987 Koyker grain auger drives from either side and has a smooth way of moving grain which we don't see in other augers. I like the easy-on, easy-off pulling hitch."

On the "worst buy" side, Dick is disappointed with his 1985 New Holland 451 3-pt. 9-ft. mower. "The knife drive plates wouldn't stand up to heavy grass mowing. They were expensive to repair and caused a lot of downtime. I replaced them three times before I got rid of the mower. Beware of independent mower companies using this same drive system."