

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

Randomly selected farmers "tell it like it is" in nominating their "best" and "worst" buys.

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William Farrar, Dewittville, New York: "By the time my Deere 4-WD 2550 tractor had 130 hrs. on it, the brakes didn't work right, the hydraulic pressure was low when the tractor was warmed up, and the head gasket leaked oil. The dealer fixed the brakes and put on a new head gasket but couldn't find the reason for the low hydraulic pressure. After another 100 hrs. it lost even more pressure. I took it back. They found it had a crack in a casting in the high/low shift. At 480 hrs. a hydraulic line in the transmission fell apart. While the dealer fixed it I used a 4-WD 2950 Deere which is my best buy. It's real nice to drive and starts well in cold weather. I like the way it looks and handles and it's easy to service."

John Cruthis, Brinkley, Arkansas: "One of my best buys has been a 1984 2-180 White tractor. I bought it last winter with 1,250 hrs. and have only replaced an alternator and two batteries."

Sam Hubbard, Wellsburg, West Virginia: Sam's disappointed with his 4525 Rockwell circular saw. "It worked okay for awhile and then started to make a loud noise when it died down. I adjusted the brushes a few times to keep it going. What bothers me most is that they no longer make brush holders for the saw

perfect. I made a spacer system to move the flywheel further from the drive shaft so shear pins can be replaced easier."

Louis Davidson, Quincy, Ohio: "My 1986 F-250 Ford pickup with 6.9 diesel engine is a jewel to drive. Has an abundance of power and load carrying capacity for pulling trailers and wagons." He's not as happy with the dealer-applied undercoating. "It had a 3-yr. warranty but within 6 months it had practically all disappeared and rusting began. A local garage owner recommended Ziebart. This was applied and now there's a heavy undercoating with no visible rust. It's more expensive, but worth it."

D. DeRolph, Glenford, Ohio: A 309 Gehl manure spreader is his "best buy". "Unloads fast, uses very little power and is the most trouble-free spreader I've ever had for hauling slurry manure from my free stall barn."

As "worst buy", he nominates his Black & Decker cordless drill/driver. "It's so weak it won't drill a small hole in hard wood or any metal. Also, it loses what power it does have very quickly."

J. Allison, Clinton, Kentucky: "Our best buy is a Dickey-john grain loss monitor for our New Holland TR-70 combine. We feel it paid for itself on 300 acres of corn. We've always had problems keeping corn in the combine on hillsides. This monitor, once you get it calibrated, tells you when to slow down or speed up. Company was helpful installing and calibrating the monitor."

Robert Shawver, Portland, Indiana: "I've used Herschel Corp.'s Tiger Jaws on my combine for two seasons. I've cut more than 500 acres of beans and wheat and have never had to put in one section. On a regular sickle it would've taken four refills of sections."

Howard Morris, Hagerman, Idaho: "The four-speed overdrive transmission on my 1984 GMC 6.2 diesel pickup 1/2-ton has been replaced three times in two years. I've called the GMC complaint center without getting any satisfaction or help in replacing the transmission. Constant trips to the shop have left me with a pickup with no power, a poor transmission and no trade-in value."

He names his 4440 Deere as "best buy". "I've had this tractor since it was new and have never had to take it back to the dealer. It's now logged 5,500 hrs. and still runs like a top."

Jim Rehfeld, Sheridan Lake, Colorado: "Our OMC 435 grinder-mixer has a very poor unload system. We had to replace the hydraulic pump in the first 20 hrs. It leaks grain everywhere."

He likes his 1982 4-WD Versatile 160 tractor, though. "We use it every day loading silage, cleaning corrals, silos, and along fence rows. Also use it to dig post holes, cut weeds, feed round bales, clear roads, move snow and bring in cattle. Have had very little trouble in 2,000 hrs."

Keith Eckel, Olney, Illinois: He names his 1980 PT-225 Steiger as "best buy". "It's given good service. With 1,800 hrs. it's only had a few minor problems. However, I'd prefer a Deutz engine over the "Cat" engine for better fuel economy. I'd also like more leg room."

R. Utley, Madisonville, Kentucky: "My Aqua Therm furnace which I first read about in FARM SHOW, is best buy. I installed it in my garage so we no longer have the dust and smoke inside the

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and it's only 3 years old."

As "best buy" Sam cites his 1986 New Holland 472 Haybine. "I'm happy with its performance, leaf retention, ease of operation and excellent design over other mower-conditioners."

Tom Cassan, Dundalk, Ontario: "We bought a Bush Hog power disk. It does a real good job on light land but the gauge wheels are far too light. It's a compact unit that's easy to handle. However, it doesn't work well for us on a hard, tight sod such as old alfalfa pasture."

E. Swiggum, Dodgeville, Wisconsin: "My best buy is a Sheahan auger manure spreader. It has two augers which are enclosed half way up making it self-cleaning. It discharges manure out the back and to both sides in a 30 to 40-ft. wide pattern. This spreader will handle soupy manure as well as chunky frozen manure."

Jacob D. Reisig, Russell, Kansas: He names his Deere 1986 2350 4-WD tractor as "best buy". "It's a good tractor to drill with and it's handy for hauling big bales to cattle. Turns short and you don't need a ladder to get in the cab or to the fuel tank."

John Ellis, Boulder, Colorado: "Our 1983 Hesston 4600 baler will bale rings around almost every other baler on the market. Makes good tight bales and seldom misses a tie. However, the shear bolt location is less than