

the diesel engine, but when it comes time to trade it in, it brings back far more trade value than a gas model.”

K.L. Morgan, Lone Jack, Mo.: “My **Honda Rancher** ATV just works. It starts and runs every time. It’s very dependable.

“Unlike my Honda, my **Massimo** UTV 500 SXS from Tractor Supply is the most unreliable piece of equipment I’ve ever purchased. I never knew from day to day how or if it would run. Tractor Supply should be ashamed to sell this Chinese junk. I’m not alone in my view, as there are hundreds of negative reviews online.”

Lucas Greff, Mott, N.D.: “My best purchase in the last two years is my 2024 **Subaru Forester**. I commute to work during the weekdays, covering 20 miles of gravel roads, 60 miles of two-lane roads, and 120 miles of interstate each day. In two years of owning this vehicle, we’ve put 88,000 miles on it in every weather condition North Dakota has to offer. In that time, two sets of tires and oil changes have been the only maintenance required.”

Paul Ruff, Solon, Iowa: “In 1994, I purchased a used **Kubota** AT70S tiller. I gave it a tune-up, and 30+ years later, it still starts on the first or second pull. There’s a good availability of parts if needed.”

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Bill Halstead, Dowling, Mich.: “I didn’t pay anything for my best buy. I won my **Kawasaki Mule** in 2009 at a farm show in Ft. Wayne, Ind. I still use it every day. In fact, my Rottweiler just went for a several-mile ride. I’ve replaced the battery and two tires over the years, but overall, it’s been trouble-free.

“My **Comfort-Aire** 1200 Btu mini split isn’t so great. I’ve charged it twice, but didn’t find a leak either time. It stopped working again, so I have to call for the service man as I write this note. Three times and out.”

Robert Boomershine, Bethalto, Ill.: “My **Hatfield** .410 pump shotgun with screw-in chokes won’t run. It’ll fire and eject the shell in the chamber, but won’t feed another round. It’s a single-shot pump.”

Don Wooley, Lawton, Okla.: “**Home Depot** doesn’t want my business—for a silly and strange reason. I’ve rented large tools from Home Depot for years with no problems.

“Recently, I wanted to rent an excavator. They refused me because I won’t buy a smartphone. Their new policy requires me to take a picture of their QR code, then take a photo of myself with my phone. My credit card, cash, credit history and ID are all perfect. My letter to CEO Decker was dismissed. My first stop now is Lowe’s.”

Terry Herring, Crawfordville, Fla.: Terry is the satisfied owner of a 2022 **New Holland** Boomer 45. “I use it more as a forklift than a tractor. I have almost everything around my place on pallets, and it’s a great help. We put our firewood in 270-gal. totes turned on their side, and we can take a full tote from the woodshed to the house with no problem. This is my fifth New Holland, and I find them to be very dependable.”

Mel Mortenson, Montevideo, Minn.: “I recently purchased a **WoodMaxx** MX-9900 chipper/shredder (www.woodmaxx.com; ph 855-966-3629). So far, I’m totally impressed with it. We went through a large pile of branches in a very short time. It may

have cost a few bucks more than others out there, but I feel it was well worth it.”

Jay E. Wulff, Council Bluffs, Iowa: “Two years ago, I bought a used 1994 **Deere** 425 garden tractor. I really like this little thing. It reaches places my larger compact tractor can’t reach. It came with a loader and a snow blade that are really handy. I’d love it to have front-wheel assist, but I’m happy with it for now.

“I try not to buy undesirable stuff, so I thank **FARM SHOW** for this ‘Best, Worst Buy’ bit. I do read it and hopefully save money because of it.”

Henk de Jong, Fordwich, Ontario: “We bought a **Kubota** M5111 tractor last fall. One thing I really like is the short (tight) steering radius. It’s the all-around right tractor for our farm.

“About two years ago, we bought pink square plastic step-in fence stakes in (other colors were available). They’ve turned out to be a worst buy. The plastic clips break off if exposed to sunlight. Another disadvantage is that the steel pin you step into the ground gets rusty really fast, so it’s hard to get out of the ground.”

Robert Lang, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.: Robert is the satisfied owner of a 2023 **Chevrolet** Equinox RS. “I traded a 2021 Equinox LS in for the 2023, and it’s been an awesome little SUV, as was the ‘21. It gets decent fuel mileage, rides well, and has plenty of legroom 99% of the time. This non-turbo is a little less peppy compared to our LS, but we’ve adjusted to it. We also have a 2013 Equinox that we bought used and use as our daily driver. It’s been great as well. This best buy is coming from a lifelong Ford guy. I own a Ford F-150 and plan to buy an F-250 when the time comes.

“My 2023 IBGT inverter, multi-function **YesWelder** MIG-205DS welding machine is my worst buy. It’s great for light arc welding, but you need a college degree in calculus and electric power to figure out the settings for MIG welding. I purchased this model because I figured the digital display would make setting it up a breeze for my tired mind. It’s turned into a \$500 space waster and dust collector.”



Joe Wasson, Middletown, Iowa: Joe nominates **Safety Seal** by Martins tire plugs as a best buy (<https://safetyseal.com>; ph 866-409-7225). “I’ve used these tire repair plugs for nearly 50 years, from when they first came out in the 1970s while I was working at a roadside gas station/repair shop. I usually keep a kit in my truck and always have one in my farm shop. While they’re specifically designed for small cars, light trucks and trailer tires, I’ve also repaired tractor and semi tires with them. These are a great tire repair kit.”

Marcus Yoder, Grove City, Minn.: “After mice chewed through some wiring in my skid loader, I threw a **Grandpa Gus** mouse repellent pouch in the machine. Within two weeks, more wires were chewed off, and just three inches from the packet, a mouse with



OEM 56V 5Ah battery shown on left, 2.5Ah battery in middle, and non-OEM 5Ah battery on right.

Non-OEM Battery Replacement

Scott Geyer, Lakeville, Minn.: “I’ve written before about the **EGO** battery-powered push mower I use for a small yard. While the battery-powered mowers don’t seem to generate the same lift as gas-powered mowers, they’re easy to use and store.

“I’ve used the **EGO** push mower, trimmer and blower for three seasons now. I’ve had good luck with them, except that the mower’s tires are wearing out quickly (my model is push-only).

“The mower came with an **EGO** 56V 5Ah battery that could mow for about 60 min. on a full charge when new. This decreased to about 45 min. in year two, and then it started losing connection, lasting only 20 to 30 min. at the start of this season.

“It’s no fun to wait for a battery to charge while mowing; what used to take just a few minutes to refuel with gas now takes a lot longer to charge.

“Replacement batteries are over half the price of the mower and battery purchase. I’ve read and heard that non-OEM batteries are readily available, but aren’t as good as OEM.

a nest of babies was found. The packet was chewed open and the contents scattered.”

Frank Bodine, Thonotosassa, Fla.: “I have a **RYOBI** ONE+ mini chainsaw that’s a best buy. The **RYOBI** ONE+ tools aren’t known as professional tools, but in the aftermath of Hurricane Milton last year, with no electricity or open gas stations, my mini chainsaw more than paid for itself. I had a 15-in. winged elm snap off, and this tool just kept cutting and cutting. Well worth the purchase.”

Tim Lambert, Lower Ship Harbour, N.S.: “My best buy is my **Case** IH tractor, bought in 2003. It came with a front-end loader, and I had rear hydraulics installed to operate later purchases (backhoe, wood splitter and chipper). It’s ultra dependable. The only repair in over 20 years was to recondition the alternator.”

Colin Smith, Franklin, N.J.: Colin’s impressed with his 2022 **Milwaukee** M18 tool system. “My battery grease gun failed after several years of spoiling me. I came across a sale at Acme Tools, where I found an M18 Milwaukee kit that included a grease gun and a high-torque 1/2-in. impact. Since I wanted the grease gun and the price was excellent, I bought it. The grease gun is so much better than my old one. It has many nice features. The impact was a surprise. It has more power than I expected, and the battery life is excellent. I’ve since added several M18 tools to my toolbox.

“I’ve discovered that any **Harbor Freight** pump is a worst buy. They don’t have parts for many of their products, and if a pump fails, they have a special return policy that

“Since my mower is aging, I didn’t feel confident about spending over \$300 on a new battery. I found a cheaper replacement on Amazon for \$80. Both batteries are 5Ah.

“The cheap battery had mixed reviews, so I knew it was a gamble. It arrived fully charged and ran for 55 min. It seemed lighter to me, so I weighed both batteries. The OEM weighed 4.7 lbs., and the knockoff was 4.2 lbs., leading me to believe it’s made of lighter, less durable materials. But both performed similarly when new. In contrast, my 2Ah battery weighs 2.6 lbs. and is easier to carry in a string trimmer or blower.

“I doubt the knockoff battery will last two full seasons, but at 25% of the cost of a new OEM battery, I could buy a new one each season, and it’ll still be better than the OEM version. The cheap battery lasted the whole season and still mows at just under an hour.

“Reviews were mostly either good or really bad on these, but my experience was positive and saved me quite a bit of money.”

includes restocking fees, even if the item is only a few days old.

“I purchased a transfer pump and a booster pump to move water over a distance. The transfer pump overheated and slowed to a trickle, even with a booster pump taking some of the strain. The booster pump only moved clear water, which went through the extra pump vane in too short a time, and none were available at the store.”

Larry Odell, Woodstock, Ontario: “I bought an **Echo** 590 chainsaw three years ago that worked well until the clutch flew apart. As it was still under warranty, all parts were supplied at no charge. Thank you, Echo Corp.

“I have a **New Holland** 973 flex header that needed new floor panels. Our local dealer quoted me a price of \$936 for one panel, which was ridiculous. I had a fabrication shop create three new panels out of stainless steel, resulting in a total cost of \$240, which represents a savings of \$2,568. It pays to look for alternatives.”

Dan Ashburn, Bloomfield, N.M.: On the positive side is Dan’s 2023 5-wheel **Enorossi** hay rake (www.enorossi.it/en; ph 252-442-0700). “This hay rake is so simple, there’s almost nothing to go wrong with it. It’s also very easy on the hay and doesn’t knock leaves off of alfalfa like a powered rake will. It was also very affordable.”

On the negative side is a **Harbor Freight** Bauer hammer drill purchased new. “The drill got stuck in hammer mode. I took it back to Harbor Freight, and it was one day out of warranty. But Harbor Freight replaced it, I just had to buy the \$20 extended warranty, so I guess it worked out okay after all.”