

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

David Nixon, Medina, N.Y.: "My 2004 **Kubota G 2160** riding mower equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine has required only routine maintenance. I also like my 2006 **Kubota L 3130** loader tractor. It always starts right up and does the job. No problems."

Philip K. Davis, Carbondale, Ill.: "I replaced the blades on my **Deere 725** front-deck riding mower with **Meg-Mo** blades (ph 877 625-0125; www.meg-mo.com). They consist of a steel disc with four cutting blades attached. It was developed to eliminate the time and expense needed to maintain conventional mower blades. When the blade wears out you don't have to replace the whole blade. Instead, you keep the disk and replace only the knives, which last considerably longer than conventional blades. I couldn't be more pleased with them."

Ira Miller, Dry Fork, W. Va.: Ira's the satisfied owner of an **H & S** heavy duty twin auger forage wagon. "This machine is a masterpiece of engineering and construction. It has a variable speed main apron and twin auger discharge with an adjustable extension, which make this wagon a pleasure to operate. It never disappoints me, even in tough haylage."

John Ensign, Peru, Ind.: "My 2007 **Chevrolet Colorado 2-WD** pickup equipped with a 5-cyl. engine is my worst buy. It isn't very fuel efficient and has a large turning radius. At about 7,000 miles the throttle body had to be changed. I was left stranded twice until this situation was corrected. The only redeeming part of this experience is that the dealer was eager to help with warranty repairs. I wouldn't recommend the purchase of any GM product equipped with the 5-cyl. engine."

Augie Kooistra, Ephrata, Wash.: "Last April bought a **Sears 21-in.** dethatcher with a 5 1/2 hp engine. It listed for \$699 plus tax and came with a money-back guarantee. At first I wasn't pleased with the design, but after a couple of easy modifications it performed beautifully."

"I first took the bolts out of the rear exit door so the door can freely swing on the hinge pin, allowing newly dethatched grass to exit evenly. I also removed the left and right bar guards to keep new thatch from catching on them and building up. It's lightweight, pushes easily, and can be adjusted up or down. I do wish it had an adjustable ground speed control. Otherwise I'm well pleased with it."

Ray Bryant, Williston, Fla.: "My 1982 **Chevrolet 1/2-ton** pickup equipped with a 6.2-diesel engine has more than 275,000 miles with no problems. It gets 22 to 25 mpg on the freeway going 75 to 80 mph. We use this pickup every day."

Ivan Renier, Brussels, Wis.: "My **Ford 4000** tractor is easy to climb onto and easy to handle. I use it mainly for garden work and for cutting grass."

"My **Baker Co.** sawmill makes it easy to turn logs into lumber for my building needs (ph 800 548-6914; www.baker-online.com).

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"My **Jacobs** wind turbine has broken down more often than it has produced power, and the company service is poor. The idea behind this wind turbine was good, but the execution stinks."

L.C. Reese, Beattyville, Ky.: "My 2005 **Kubota M6800** tractor is my worst buy. After a couple of years the clutch and pressure plate went bad, and the company wouldn't honor the warranty. Yet even my dealer said the clutch system on this tractor is weak. I've operated tractors all my life and treated this one like a baby, and I was the only person to operate it."

Leilani Peterson, Englewood, Colo.: "My two **Yard Machine** mowers are both worst buys. Parts are difficult to find, and I was given the run-around by the company. The 6.25 hp model has a broken spring and I've tried for two years to find a replacement for it with no luck. The 4 hp model heats up and then shuts down before I can mow even an average-sized yard. I have to let the machine sit for 24 hours before I can restart it."

Ben Haney, Franklin, N.Y.: Ben's happy with his 1997 **Deere 335** round baler. "I use it to make 400 to 500 bales every year, some of them weighing up to 2,000 lbs. Yet this baler has been virtually trouble-free."

Pete Posthumus, West Milford, N.J.: "Ever since I started using **Spalding Fly Predators** I've seen a significant drop in our fly population (ph 888 562-5696; www.spalding-labs.com). Fly Predators attack flies at pupa stage before they have a chance to reproduce and multiply. They come in sealed see-through shipping pouches that are mailed to you. A few days after arrival the "pupal parasitoids" will begin to emerge and then you release them near manure and other pest fly breeding areas each week during warm weather. The pupal parasitoids attack the pest fly's pupa stage. They deposit eggs inside the pest fly pupa which develop into mature adults within 14 to 21 days. The pest fly larva is consumed as a source of food by the developing fly predators. Immediately upon emergence the fly predators mate and start the cycle all over again."

"My **Newer** manure spreader (see FARM SHOW's Vol. 31, No. 6) is simple, reliable and easy to clean (ph 866 626-8732; www.newerspreeder.com). The aluminum spreader comes with a grinding drum that crumbles manure into small pieces and spreads it evenly over the ground. It can be pulled by a small garden tractor, 4-wheeler or golf cart. There's an engagement lever on each wheel. You just give them both a gentle kick to engage them and then the drum will turn with the wheels as you drive. As the drum turns, manure is passed out the bottom of the spreader, crumbled and dropped in a 3-ft. wide path about 1/2 to 3/4 in. thick. The crumbled manure decomposes very quickly."

Darrell Seavey, Sonora, Calif.: Darrell's disappointed with his **DR** electric log splitter. "I used it for less than two hours the first year. The next year it wouldn't work. The company said the splitter was out of warranty and wouldn't do anything except give me a discount on a new model. I took the machine to a local repair shop and they said it filled with silicone. I know I didn't put any silicone in it so it had to have been done at the factory. This experience has really soured me on DR's equipment."

Herman Vander Vos, Bozeman, Mont.: "I like my 24 hp **Husqvarna** riding mower equipped with a 48-in. deck. I bought it slightly used at a bargain price. It steers easy and turns short, and all the controls are easy to operate. It has a lot of power and is a pleasure to operate."

Donald G. Hale, Gadsden, Alabama: Donald's impressed with his 2008 **Honda Foreman 500 4-WD** ATV. "It has power steering which I really like. It steers so well



Photos show pipe handle added to chute to make it easier to use.

Modified "Best Buy" Squeeze Chute

"I recently made modifications to my 'best buy' Priefert squeeze chute to make it easier for one man to use," says Jim Brashears, Olathe, Kan.

According to Brashears, the handle that's designed to close the chute's end gate was hard to get to. "If an animal refuses to go into the chute's automatic headgate and tries to back out, you're behind it and can't get to the side in order to close the end-gate," he says.

To solve the problem, he clamped a length of pipe to the handle located on the left side of the chute. He clamped another length of pipe, with a chain link welded to the top of it, to the right side of the chute. Then he ran a rope from the handle-mount-

ed pipe, through the chain link, and out to a post in the tub sweep.

"Now when I push an animal into the chute, I jerk the rope to close the endgate as soon as the animal gets in. That way if the animal balks inside, it can't back out," says Brashears.

Brashears adds that he really likes the chute's spring-loaded side exit. "You push a foot pedal down to let the animal out, then push the pedal again and the exit door slams shut ready for the next animal," he notes.

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that driving it is like riding on water. It also has a lot of power."

He's disappointed with the **Deere 3,800** psi pressure washer he bought at Lowes. "I hadn't burned even one tank of gas with it before it lost pressure and quit pumping air. I took it back to Lowes and they said they'd have to send it back. However, I thought they should give me a new one as it wasn't my fault the machine didn't work. I had to make two 20-mile round trips, and now I have to do without a pressure washer for who knows how long."

Ted Luckenbaugh, Abbottstown, Penn.: "I like my **Grizzly** power tools which include a table saw, band saw and jointer (www.grizzly.com). All of them are extremely well built and work great. The company's customer service is top notch."

Harvey B. Zimmerman III, Leonardtown, Md.: "The 371 **Detroit 2-cycle** diesel engine that powers our Norbark debarker has plenty of power and doesn't leak oil. The engine is equipped with twin turbos and N90 injectors and is fuel efficient. We highly recommend this engine."

"My **Burco 200-amp 2-cycle** welder is my worst buy. We paid \$1,800 for it and it soon developed electronic problems. The welding supply store stopped carrying this welder about a month after we bought it, so we can't find parts for it anywhere."

James H. Wheeler, Trinidad, Colo.: "I like **Seal Lube** seal expander, which is designed to stop rubber seal leaks in any fluid system (ph 800 434-9192; www.seallube.com). I used it on an old Case 320 tractor which had a power steering ram that would leak out all the fluid overnight. I poured about 2 oz. of Seal Lube in the hydraulic reservoir and it never leaked again. I also used it in my 1981 Chevrolet pickup, which was equipped with a Tommy Lift that seeped oil at the ram shaft. One tablespoon solved the problem. It's a great product."

"My wife bought me a **Drill Doctor** drill sharpener that has proved to be a best buy. I had saved up worn drill bits over the past 50 years, some of them so dull they wouldn't even drill a single hole. Now I can use these bits again."

Ralph R. Look, Wichita, Kan.: "I bought a used **Black & Decker** electric lawn mow-

er at a garage sale. I have three large pin oak trees that shed a lot of leaves throughout the winter. I rake the leaves into a windrow and use this mower to grind them up. It sure beats trying to start a gas-powered mower in cold weather."

"The **Lincoln 180-amp** transformer **DPE** arc welder I bought in the 1960's has been problem-free. Being involved in ham radio, I purchased a used 60-ft. tower and redesigned it to a tilt-over configuration. I bought the welder to build up hardware for the tilt-over brackets. I've used the welder periodically ever since."

Kate Alsup, Nokomis, Ill.: Kate's dad gave her a **Direct Electronics** remote car starter from Best Buy to install in her 1997 Grand Prix. She wanted to use it to warm up her car on January mornings. It cost \$189. She was told the device had a 24 min. shut-off timer which would activate in case she forgot to shut off the engine.

Soon after it was installed, she walked out of her house to dump the garbage and noticed her car was running. She figured maybe she had bumped the remote in her purse, turning it on. The next day the car started on its own again, and the day after. The next day it wouldn't start. The fuel pump was burned out because the car had run out of fuel. When she called Best Buy, she was told there was a recall on her car starter.

"It cost me \$773 to get towed and then to get the car going again. I had another car starter installed and, again, the car kept starting on its own," says Kate. So she had the unit removed and contacted the manufacturer to tell them of her troubles. Amazingly the company sent her a check for \$1,250 to cover her troubles. "I was fortunate because I had all the receipts and records of all the repairs I made to the car and who I had talked to. This was a potentially dangerous situation because if you park in an attached garage and the car starts on its own, your home could fill up with carbon monoxide."