

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

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and even though the machine was still under warranty the company refused to repair it free of charge. They said the problem was due to moisture in the gearbox. They wanted more money for a new gearbox than what I paid for the tiller itself. Now I have a tiller that I can't even use."

Jeffrey Gresch, Marietta, Ga.: Jeffrey's impressed with his 2004 DR 6 1/2 hp Powerwagon. "This is my second Powerwagon - the first one was a 4 hp model.



I used that machine for 12 years with no problems and then sold it for almost as much as I paid for it. I use the new model almost every day with the sulky. It works even better than advertised, and the customer service is outstanding. No problems."

John G. Ruff, Logan, Kan.: "I like Oxy multi-purpose cleaner. This stuff cleans anything. Just spray it on and wipe with a paper towel. It works better than any cleaner I've ever used. I paid only \$1 for it, but I suspect this is an introductory price that won't last long."

Robert C. Petersen, Summerdale, Ala.: "It's the handiest machine I've ever owned," says Robert about his 2006 Kubota RTV 900 utility vehicle equipped with a winch and dump body. "It has plenty of power and the winch is handy. The only problem I had was with the machine's plastic radiator, when two pins on the bottom broke off. A new radiator would have cost about \$400, so I had a local radiator shop plastic weld it back together."

Tom Gibbs, Dauphin, Man.: "My Grasshopper 729 zero turn riding mower performs as well as advertised. It cuts at high ground speeds and does a good job. It's also easy to service."

He's disappointed with the fuel economy on his 2010 Ford Ranger pickup. "This pickup doesn't even come close to advertised fuel economy. It's lucky to average 22 mpg, whereas the company advertises 29 mpg."

Kenneth Carr, Greenville, S.C.: A Toro Personal Pace lawn mower rates as Kenneth's "best buy". "Pushing on the handle regulates the speed of the mower. It always starts and has required very little maintenance. I can walk as fast or slow as the need requires, depending on whether I'm going up or down slopes or working in light or heavy grass."

Thomas Graham, Scranton, Penn.: "My Deere A tractor at one time belonged to my grandfather. Now I own it and it still runs great. I have only one leg, but I can still drive this tractor with no problem."

Gary K. Gladin, Oakley, Kan.: "The 5 by 7-ft. ramp-gate on the 7 by 12-ft. trailer that hauls my riding mower got too heavy, so two years ago I bought a Gorilla Lift trailer tailgate lift assist system (ph 877 388-8895; www.GorillaLift.com). It takes almost all the weight off the trailer's tailgate and lets me lower it with virtually no effort. It works on tailgates from 4 to 6 ft. high.

"The unit attaches to both sides of the tailgate and fully encloses the lifting system inside a housing. The lifting system consists of 5-ft. long sq. tubes with concentric garage door-like springs inside them and rollers on the ends that guide a cable, which bolts about



3 ft. up on the ramp gate. The housings sit on top of the trailer's side rails. The instructions that came with the unit were great. Now just a gentle push or pull in either direction is all it takes for the tailgate to float up and down. The entire system is built tough and holding up well."

Jo Nylander, Fulks Run, Va.: "My 2002 Honda Rancher 4-wheeler goes anywhere and has never gotten stuck. It's a reliable machine.

"My Ryobi weedeater equipped with a brush blade can't handle anything bigger than a thistle, and that's provided I can get the machine started. After pulling on the cord for 10 minutes, I'm often too tired to work anyway. I've taken this machine in numerous times for repairs."

Richard Nason, Otisfield, Maine: "My Stihl 390M chainsaw is my best buy. I've owned three Stihl saws and all were trouble-free.

"My 1989 Mercury 50 hp outboard motor was my worst buy. With less than 40 hrs. on it the electronics failed."

Joseph Syczylo, North Fork, Idaho: "My Tecumseh 8 hp horizontal shaft gas engine is my worst buy. It starts hard and needs starting fluid whenever the temperature drops to 30 degrees or below. The carburetor adjusting screw fell out and got lost while I was using the engine to operate a log splitter. I noticed oil coming out of the governor, due to a fitting on the crankcase vent that had frozen with condensation. Finally I replaced the engine with a Honda GX 340 model. It always starts on the first or second pull."

Allen Beiler, Stuarts Draft, Va.: "My 2007 H&S heavy duty twin auger, self-unloading silage wagon is well built and can easily handle all types of forage. It's definitely the best forage wagon we've ever owned."

E&G Woods, Ltd., Bothwell, Ont.: "We purchased a used 1996 Ford F-250 diesel pickup from an estate and put about 200,000 miles on it with no problems. A lot of those miles were spent pulling a 32-ft. 5th wheel RV trailer across the country."

Gilbert Pritchard, Kalkaska, Mich.: "I love my Bad Boy zero turn riding mower equipped with a 60-in. deck and 26 hp Kohler engine (www.badboymowers.com). I bought it three years and many acres of lawn ago. No problems so far, even though sometimes I use this mower hard, almost like a Bush Hog."

Bill Kropelin, Jeffersonville, Vt.: "My 2009 Kubota L4400 loader tractor is a versatile and reliable machine."

Robert Menard, Portland, Maine: Robert's impressed with his 2008 Ingersoll 4223 lawn tractor. "I bought this tractor directly from the factory in Portland, Maine. It's a great lawn tractor, with superior craftsmanship and quality construction. It's powered by a 2-cyl. Briggs Vanguard engine, which is tremendously powerful. Multiple attachments are available for this tractor, with the same quality construction. I can mow my 2-acre lawn in half the time it used to take with my old mower. Also, the tractor's big 16-in. rear tires let it ride smooth on rough ground."

Charles Plushanski, Kutztown, Penn.: A Skil 4 1/2-in. angle grinder rates as Charles's



John & Dave Hebert, Owaneco, Ill.: After feeding cattle on an open concrete slab for several years, John & Dave decided to make the jump to a Winkler hoop building that gives them optimum feeding and environmental conditions and would allow for a deep-bedded manure buildup. The building is 42 by 182 ft. long and houses 80 head at one end. The Heberts are able to let manure build up for about 6 months, using cornstalk bedding. One thing the men say they really like about the building is that it's about 15 degrees cooler in summer and 15 degrees warmer in winter, even with the open ends. There's also a ridge vent for summer ventilation. At the center of the building they set up a work and storage area.

"best buy". "I bought this grinder after my Makita 4 1/2-in. angle grinder broke and use it all the time.

"The Makita grinder lasted only about three weeks and was my worst buy. I was using it to grind down a part on my manure spreader when the gearing inside the unit broke. I found out later that it was made in China."

Adam Nation, Crawford, Ga.: A 2010 Husqvarna 575 XP chainsaw rates as Adam's "best buy". "I use this saw to cut trees every day, and it has plenty of power to go through large hardwoods and pines. It's a strong, durable saw.

"My Stihl 390 MS chainsaw is my worst buy. One week after I bought it the chain tensioner broke, and recently I had to replace the handle which is made of plastic. Also, I had to replace rubber bushings three times in two years."

Gregory Innerst, Red Lion, Penn.: "My Kuhn 12-wheel SpeedRake is my best buy. My past experience with wheel rakes was terrible, but this V-rake is amazing. It'll rake anything including wet alfalfa, sudan grass, and even corn stalks. I sold my other rakes, and now this rake is the only one on our farm. My neighbor rented it once and was so impressed that he bought his own. It's an excellent piece of equipment."

Edward Weber, Cincinnati, Ohio: "I have almost 1,000 hrs. on my 2003 New Holland TC-40 4-WD tractor with no problems, except for a pin in the forward-reverse shift lever that came out a couple times. I use this tractor with a 6-ft., 3-pt. mounted finish mower and to plow snow with a 7-ft., rear-mount blade. I also use it with a 3-pt. mounted log splitter, a fertilizer and salt spreader, a rear carryall, a rotary tiller and many other pieces of equipment. I mounted a quick hitch on the 3-pt., which makes changing equipment an easier job."

Radford White, Buffalo, W. Va.: "It's my worst buy ever," says Radford about his 2005

"Two days after the warranty expired the brake rod broke."

Simplicity riding mower. "Two days after the warranty expired the brake rod broke. The company paid for the part, but I had to pay for labor and for a new choke cable that the 'authorized' dealer broke. Now this mower is sitting out in my barn with a blown

transmission, and I own a Cub Cadet."

Charles D. Ewton, Chattanooga, Tenn.: "My Grasshopper 322D riding mower equipped with a diesel engine is easy to use and has a comfortable seat. It has reduced my mowing time by half.

"My 2009 Cub Cadet RT 65 rototiller is my worst buy. I used it one time last year and then stored it in the barn. When I used it for the first time last spring, the gearshift lever froze up so I couldn't shift gears. I took the rototiller to a repair shop where I was told the machine had a 2-year warranty. However, the shop called 30 days later and said the gearbox had moisture in it so they wouldn't repair it under warranty. I have no idea how moisture got into the gearbox.

"I was told a new gearbox would cost almost as much as what I paid for the rototiller. Now I have a new Cub Cadet rototiller that I can't use because I can't afford to repair it."

Stuart Shepard, Chapman, Kan.: "My Farmtrac 530 4-WD diesel-powered tractor always starts, has a short turning radius, and steers easy. This tractor does the work of a larger model yet is easy on fuel. The only weak point is the seat."

R.A. Lanford, Palmyra, Va.: "I've had good luck with my 2004 Kubota M6800 loader tractor equipped with a 4-in-1 bucket.

"I'm well satisfied with my 2004 Chevrolet Duramax 3500 pickup. Both the Kubota tractor and the Chevy pickup are amazing machines."

Emil Kalvoda, Mandan, N. Dak.: "My 2008 Ford Ranger is a nice handling pickup. It gets about 23 mpg on the highway which I think is pretty good, and it has a comfortable ride."

Paul A. Badger, Lecompton, Kan.: "I've used my 2002 DR Powerwagon, equipped with a 6 3/4 hp engine, to haul many loads of firewood with no problems. I bought this little rig with the sulky. The machine came with an interchangeable ABS plastic cargo box, which I've used to mix and haul wet concrete. I'm well pleased with my Powerwagon.

"I like my Grasshopper 618 riding mower equipped with an 18 hp Kohler engine, but have had problems with sizing on the drive pulley idler. Otherwise this machine is easy to operate. The deck tilts up, which is really handy for servicing the blades."

Edmund Weninger, Billings, Mont.: Edmund nominates his Sears Craftsman 7 1/2 hp chipper-shredder as his "worst buy". "This machine works well on small tree limbs, but it won't handle 3 1/2-in. dia. limbs