

Todd Heidemann, Stevensville, Mont.: "My 2005 **Polaris Sportsman** 4-wheeler is an outstanding best buy for hunting and working in all types of weather and altitudes. The internal engine brake is a great feature to have here in mountainous country."

Richard Diefenbach, Danville, Vt.: "My L4200 **Kubota** tractor has been a real workhorse for snow removal, road building, grading, bushhogging, and bringing in logs for firewood. I bought it used 8 years ago with 300 hrs. on it. Now it has almost 1,200 hrs. Besides changing fluids and filters, the only repairs I've made are to a tie rod and glow plugs."

T.A. Sampso, Canehille, Ark.: "In a previous issue someone raved about **O'Keefe's Hand Cream** so I bought some. I've used dozens of products over the years but every winter would still suffer from gapping, bleeding, painful fingertip cracks. I'm overjoyed to say that this last winter was an exception. This product is incredible. Not a single crack. It also seems to act like a barrier cream, protecting the hands for several hours after application. Finally a product that delivers as promised!"

Glenn Hegman, Wis.: "The **Thermos** brand vacuum cup SK1000 truly lives up to its advertising claims. If you like HOT coffee when you're outside working in the middle of winter, this cup will provide it to you."

Jerry Brandt, La Grange, Mo.: "My LX188 **Deere** riding mower equipped with a Kawasaki engine is neither a best nor a worst buy. It does a good job of cutting, but the engine surges whenever the mower isn't engaged. When the machine is cutting grass,

"One person told me the engine must have an air leak. Okay, where? Deere won't respond."

the engine runs fine. I can't find anyone who knows how to fix this problem. One person told me the engine must have an air leak. Okay, where? Deere won't respond, nor will Kawasaki. Am I stuck with this problem, or can FARM SHOW readers help?"

Jack Miller, Hoopston, Ill.: Jack's the satisfied owner of a 2012 **Mitsubishi i-MiEV** electric car. "My wife drives this car 45 to 60 miles every day, and has put more than 20,000 miles on it. Yet all we've had to do is put air in one of the tires. We plug the car in at night, and by the next morning it's ready to go. It's a great little 'go-for' car. We also own an electric Chevrolet S-10 pickup and an electric 3-wheeled motorcycle."

Ernest A. Sjuts, Urbana, Ill.: Ernest nominates his 2010 **Ford F-150 Super Crew** pickup equipped with a 5.4-liter engine as his "best buy". "It rides great and has a lot of room. It's also fuel efficient."

"My 2014 **Kenmore** refrigerator is my worst buy. The freezer compartment can't even keep Eskimo Pies frozen, and the refrigerator compartment only cools part way. I've had a repairman out twice and these problems are now a little better, but it has taken 60 days to get to this point."

Brian Bedard, Thief River Falls, Minn.: Brian's impressed with his 2014 **Maertens** coal boiler (ph 701 794-3183; www.maertensmfg.com). "I use it to heat my 1,200 sq. ft. house and 30 by 45-ft. shop. Henry Maertens is really helpful and stands by his product."

J. David Sweeney, Colebrook, Ct.: "I use **Tri-Flow** lubricant on my customer's locks and on other kinds of locking hardware,

including padlocks and hinges (www.triflowlubricants.com). The lubricant protects the dry Teflon film on such products from the weather."

Randy Wolt, Silver Lake, Kan.: Randy's had problems with his **Deere 5660** combine. "The dealer did everything he could to keep this machine going and worked on it at least 16 different times. It lost all or most of its hydraulic oil 3 different times, the bin covers wouldn't stay completely open, the rotary screen belt fell off or broke, the stone trap isolator got damaged, the AM/FM radio quit working, an armrest switch panel went bad, and the feederhouse adjustment lever broke. Fortunately these problems were covered by the company's one-year warranty. However, now I'm on my own."

Ralph Mullard, Vestaburg, Mich.: "The assembly instructions for my **Norwood HD36** bandsaw mill were easy to follow, and I ended up with a saw that works flawlessly. I've used it to cut about 4,400 board feet of lumber."

Alan Jensen, Aitkin, Minn.: A 2014 **Husqvarna 450 Rancher** chainsaw equipped with a 20-in. bar rates as Alan's "best buy". "This is the third Husqvarna saw I've owned over the last 20 years, and each one has been improved over the previous model. No engine problems with any of them. Bars, chains, clutches and other parts do wear out, but my dealer has always been able to get parts and make any needed repairs."

"Our **Gardenway** walk-behind garden seeder saves us a lot of time and labor planting our 1/2-acre garden each year. It comes with various seed plates for different seed sizes and spacings. We bought it used more than 15 years ago, but it still works like new."

Sam Michels, Zumbrota, Minn.: "My **Cleary** building was put up with shoddy building materials and poorly constructed. The materials aren't all the same color and the building is more than 10 in. out of square. Every summer I have to walk around and pound nails down. It has taken a few years, but I've finally got all the leaks stopped."

"My 2012 **Ford F-150** pickup equipped with an Ecoboost engine is hard on gas even without a load, but when it's hooked up to a small trailer it gets only 12 mpg."

David Martin, Hamlin, N.Y.: "My 2013 **Kuhn 1200-1630** Gladiator precision strip tillage machine works great."

Chris Davis, Prosper, Ct.: "I'm impressed with my 2011 **Technidea** Zip Level Pro 2000 level (ph 800 805-5383; www.ziplevel.com). This unit operates on one 9-volt battery. It sets up in seconds and is easy to reset, and it shows the elevations in large digital numbers in inches, feet or meters. I can measure over any distance or elevation without doing any math. It works around corners, up to the top of a dirt pile, or down into a ditch or footing. Great company support."

On the minus side, he lists his 2011 **Deere XUV 625I** Gator utility vehicle. "We made many trips to the dealer but never could get this machine to run right. It stalls, hesitates, and backfires and then quits running altogether. No one on our work crew trusts the machine to get them home, so now it just sits. It might be time to trade for a **Polaris Ranger**."

Rodney Huisman, Wessington Springs, S. Dak.: "Our **Panasonic SD-YD250** Bread Maker is easy to use and makes perfect bread every time."

"Our **Case IH Farmall 140** tractor is built too light for farm work. We've broken 2 front wheel rims and a loader mounting bracket in less than a year."

Roger D. Hyatt, Salome, Ariz.: Roger



Converted Ford F-250 is equipped with a round bale unroller and a modified feed unloading bin on back, and a winch-controlled snow blade on front.

Ford F-250 Converted To "All Purpose Pickup"

Brian Vigar's 1976 Ford F-250 4-WD, 3/4-ton pickup is equipped with a big 390 cu. in. engine and a heavy duty suspension lift kit.

Good thing, because the Lancer, Sask., farmer converted the pickup into an "all purpose" model that he uses hard all year long. He mounted a round bale unroller and a modified feed unloading bin on back, and a winch-controlled snow blade on front that's fitted with overhead lights. All of this add-on equipment operates off the pickup's 12-volt battery.

"It works fantastic. I can use the pickup to push snow, pick up, transport, and unroll bales, and deliver rolled steamed barley by just flipping a switch on the pickup's dash," says Vigar.

The feed bin formerly served as the grain hopper on an old Massey Harris combine, and the hopper's mounting frame bolts onto a thick metal plate that's bolted to the pickup bed's floor. The hopper still contains the original unloading auger and is fitted on the outside with a 5-ft. long flexible rubber spout.

The flexible spout sets on a metal frame bolted to the pickup bed that keeps the spout rigid during unloading. When not in use, Vigar can remove a pin and swing the spout

likes his 2004 **Dodge 2500** 4-door pickup equipped with a Hemi engine. "It has more than 140,000 miles on it but still runs great without using oil. It gets 23 mpg on the highway. The only major repair needed was a new power steering pump."

Warren Schatz, Ipswich, S. Dak.: "I work on lawn mowers and small engines. MTD and other companies are so proud of the engines they're using nowadays that you can't even find the engine's name on the machine. Also, parts can only be sourced from the manufacturer. You don't have the American company backup like you do with Briggs & Stratton or Kohler, etc. Buyer beware."

David Lenz, Royalton, Minn.: "I've owned **Deere** Gators ever since the company introduced them years ago. They've always been great machines. But I made a big mistake when I traded for a new 2013 **Deere 550XUV** Gator. This machine is poorly engineered and should have been painted lemon yellow. At times, shifting the gears is an impossible job. I have to shut the engine off and then jam the gears just to get them to engage."

"The 3 **Cub Cadet** riding mowers I've owned over the years have all been best buys. I've also owned 3 **Dodge 3/4-ton** pickups equipped with Cummins diesel engines that rode great and were fuel efficient. Now I own a **Chevrolet 3/4-ton** pickup equipped with a Duramax diesel. It doesn't ride or handle well and isn't fuel efficient. The best it gets on the highway is 14.6 mpg."

Eugene Stauffer, Barnett, Mo.: "It's a nice, small tractor for doing light yard chores but also has a lot of power," says Eugene about his 2005 **Deere 4120** compact 4-WD

over to another frame.

"I used it to deliver grain into 100-ft. long feed troughs in my pasture, and to drop rolled steam barley onto the grass," says the retired cattleman.

The bale unroller came equipped with a hand-operated winch that was used to raise and lower the unroller's arms. Vigar replaced the hand winch with a 12,000-lb. electric winch that's bolted to the feed bin's support frame.

The snow blade is fitted with a series of overhead lights mounted on homemade brackets that attach to the top of the blade. Vigar keeps the blade on the pickup all year long.

"The lights really opened things up at night and provided a better view," he says. "Even with the blade on, I could move cows at night and still see where I was going."

The pickup originally came equipped with a chrome stack on each side and straight pipes underneath. "The stacks were so loud that I couldn't even hear myself thinking. I replaced them with 6-ft. long stacks that direct the noise above the pickup," says Vigar.

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loader tractor. "I use it to mow hay with my MoCo 926 discbine and to handle big round bales, with no problems. It has about 2,300 hrs. on it."

"The **Deere 2940** 4-WD loader tractor I bought used developed internal hydraulic leaks soon after I bought it. It was in the shop several times but never got totally fixed. I paid \$16,500 for it and spent \$7,000 to \$8,000 on repairs. I sold the tractor a few months later for \$13,500 and was glad to see it go."

Donan Marsh, Upham, N. Dak.: "The **Grasshopper** riding mower I bought used has performed flawlessly. I've put more than 500 hrs. on it. My wife likes this mower, too."

Sharon King, Oxford, Miss.: "My 80-plus-year-old parents love their 2014 **Kenmore** Series 500 HE washing machine and dryer set equipped with a stainless steel tub. My mother loves not having a washing machine with an agitator. They previously owned a Kenmore washer and dryer set for 28 years. When the washing machine developed a leak they gave both machines to my sister, who was able to fix the washing machine by replacing a gasket."

John Beran, Lenox, Iowa: "I really like my 2011 **Toro** Recycler Personal Pace walk-behind, 22-in. lawn mower. The Personal Pace feature is amazing, as the machine just keeps pace with my walking speed without me ever having to adjust anything. This mower does a good job whether it's in side discharge, mulching, or bagging mode. I own 2 riding mowers, but although our yard is quite large and I turned 80 years old last year, I prefer mowing with my Toro walk-behind. The bonus in using it is the exercise that I get."