

Best & Worst Buys

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"It's trouble-free, well engineered, and built to last. Dealer service has been great.

"My worst buys are the **Yetter** 'double no-till coulters' that I mounted on my planter. They're supposed to work in no-till, but I tried using them in corn fields with a lot of trash and they didn't work well at all. I mounted fertilizer attachments behind the lead coulters and trash would not flow through. Fortunately both the dealer and company treated me well."

Paul Pleskie, Medicine Hat, Alberta: "It has more hours on it than I can count and just won't quit running," says Paul about his "best buy" 1950 **Cockshutt** 50. "It's simply never let me down."



He installed power steering and moved the driver's seat and steering wheel to the right side for easier access and improved visibility. He also converted the electric system to 12 volts for easier starting.

Linda and Tut Doane, Braintree, Vt.: "Our **Bombardier** Muskeg can go anywhere, any time, and in any weather without getting stuck. It pulls heavy loads better than anything I've ever used before. Nothing ever goes wrong with it."

Olin Parish, Richmond, Ohio: "We've had a few minor problems but the dealer took care of them right away," says Olin, satisfied owner of a 1996 **Deere** 6200. "This is the fourth Deere I've bought since 1973 and the 6200 has been the best of the bunch."

Stephen R. Hill, Chambersberg, Pa.: "In its previous life, it was a rental unit and it was used hard. I figure it has to be pretty good to still be running with relatively few problems," says Stephen about a mid 1980's **Kubota** L4150 4-WD he bought used with 2,200 hours on it.

The tractor has a good power-to-weight ratio and handles reasonably well for a 4-WD. It does fairly well on fuel but was not built for comfort as the seat sets high and controls are poorly located. It seems to be well constructed which is a blessing because when maintenance is required, there are a lot of parts that have to be removed to get at whatever needs to be fixed. I also seem to have a proliferation of fluid leaks lately, namely the front axle, hydraulics and steering, and I'm not really sure where the leaks are at."

William B. Trigg, Fayetteville, Tenn.: "My best buy of all time is my 1993 **Woodmizer** sawmill. It does everything the company says it will do. I bought it to cut about 150,000 board feet of mixed hardwoods that had been downed by a tornado. I've also used it to saw lumber that was used to build several barns and two houses. It's simple to operate.

"My 1995 4-WD **Ford Explorer** is my worst buy. It must have been made late on a Friday or early on a Monday. I spent almost as much time getting it repaired as driving it. The fuel metering system is still a problem

even though the computer card has been replaced twice. The clutch and brakes have required extensive work as have the electric windows, and the windshield was made faulty and cracked. On the other hand I like my **Ford** F-250 4-WD pickup as much as any vehicle I've ever had."

Edward L. Tomlinson, Marion, Va.: "We're pleased with our two 1998 **Ford** tractors - a 4630 turbocharged model and a 3930. The 4630 runs quieter and has a bit more power. We use these tractors mainly to handle 1,100-lb. round bales and for mowing. They both run nice and handle well."

James Warntjes, Sheldon, Iowa: "My worst buy is **Iko** asphalt shingles which I bought from Menards. When the contractor came to lay them, many of them were stuck together and tore as we separated them. I got no help from either Iko or Menards. They wouldn't reimburse us for our time or trouble."

Alton Eliason, Northford, Conn.: "It's the greatest tractor ever built," says Alton about his 1952 **Ford** 8N. "The only improvement that could possibly be made is to install power steering, which they didn't even have on tractors in those days. I ordered a Sherman up-down transmission for the tractor so I'd have a creeper gear for tiling."

James Skelton, Wauneta, Neb.: James has had good luck with his 1980 **Deere** 4240. "It's pretty dependable and parts are still generally readily available. It performs well and has lasted a long time. In fact, it still has the original starter, which turns it over easily even in cold weather."

On the other hand, fuel economy leaves something to be desired, he says. Likewise,

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the manufacturer should have used the same fuel pump it used on the 4440, which he feels is superior to the one used on the 4240.

Gary Gollehon, Brady, Mont: Gary says his 1995 **Chevrolet** S-10 Blazer is his "worst buy". "It has a 10-in. long rip in the sheet metal down the left front fender next to the hood hinge. The company says it won't pay for the repair. They should start using different beer cans to make their fenders. Another problem is that the rear window squeaks unmercifully on gravel roads because the latch is wearing out. The only way to replace it is to order a complete new rear window, at my expense."

Bernard Savoie, Kendallville, Ind.: "My best buy of all time is my 1953 **Allis-Chalmers** WD-45 tractor which I bought new. We've used it on our 250-acre farm along with an Allis WD tractor."

Gerald Burmeister, Cosmos, Minn.: "The only problem in 2,500 hours of operation was a broken brake rod," says Gerald, pleased with his 1972 **Allis-Chalmers** 185. "It's an excellent tractor for a small acreage like mine."

Gerald added hydraulic outlets on the front of the tractor for operating a front end loader. "This eliminated hoses running across the

operator's platform. They were a tripping hazard and interfered with normal clutch operation."

Murray Huff, Edmonton, Alberta: "It's reliable, very solid-built, and components are easily accessible for inspection," says Murray about his 1995 **Case-IH** "Steiger" 9350 equipped with Cummins L/O engine and standard Synchronesh transmission.

"The transmission is fuel efficient and I anticipate reliability for many years to come. I wouldn't hesitate to buy another one providing the price remains competitive.

"However, the company could improve a few things.

"They should improve the plastic they use in the heating and air conditioning system. The fan in my tractor self-destructed and air directional louvers break like toothpicks. The door lock should also be designed so the operator cannot be accidentally locked inside the cab. The latch will not work inside or outside when the lock cylinder is turned to lock."

Murray says he's considering purchasing additional weights to improve traction, the tractor's most limiting feature. He'd also like to tighten up the "slop" in the sliding stub hitch-type drawbar because the extra movement up and down causes wear and tear on all parts.

Mark Grubb, Ellsworth, Iowa: "Our **Wilrich** 3400 field cultivator works good in corn stalks without plugging up. It does a good job of smoothing out both the trash and the soil."

Thomas Childress, Laurens, S.C.: "My worst buys are two **Black & Decker** 3.7-in. drills. They look good but don't work.

"My 1987 **Ford** Ranger is neither a best nor a worst buy. It's a good pickup, but I've had to have it towed in several times. The problem is that the coil goes dead and has to be replaced. Another problem is that the brake discs are too light and warp, causing a pulsating effect when they're applied.

"My best buy is my 1993 **Mercury** Grand Marquis LS car. I had to replace a set of electric wires for \$126. Otherwise, no problems. It gets 25 mpg and has a comfortable ride."

Jerry Westphal, Williamsburg, Iowa: Jerry nominates his 1994 **Stihl** FS 40 string trimmer as his "best buy". "We use it to clear weeds from around electric fences. We also use it to trim our yard and to cut brush. Before we bought it we used a competitor's string trimmer that didn't last even one year. This one has lasted 4 1/2 years and is still going strong."

H. Booker Bunn, Woodlawn, Va.: Booker's pleased with his 1994 **Kubota** 4030, the second Kubota tractor he's owned. "Both have been super good tractors for us," he says. "If we were in the market for another tractor, it would be a Kubota. We can't think of a thing the company could change to improve them."

Don T. Kirby, Lamont, Ok.: "The only complaint I have is that the fuel gauge didn't last," says Don, pleased owner of a 1991 **Ford** Versatile 946. "It's one of three we own and none has ever gone back to the dealer for repairs. They're easy to work on and most parts can be obtained at truck parts stores."

Don added tinted windows to keep the cab cooler. He also installed a Filtration Solutions oil filter system (418 South Kansas Ave., Olathe, Kan. 66061; ph 913 829-9056). "It retails for \$450 but it cleans oil better and eliminates a lot of oil changes. Instead of changing oil, you send in a sample and the company analyzes it."

Chris Dukelow, Abbotsford, Wis.: "We've put more than 500 hours on it without any problems," says Chris, happy with his 1997 **Agco Allis** 9655 tractor. "The cab is roomy, comfortable, and has a good view, and the Buddy seat comes in handy for riders. The full 18-speed powershift transmission is smooth and easy to use. We've always had good luck with our Allis tractors and it looks like it'll continue with the new models."

On the minus side is his 1995 **Hands All Purpose** 2600 manure spreader. "It pulls hard and is supposed to be able to handle any kind of manure. However, it shoots liquid manure back at the tractor, and it takes forever to spread bedding-packed manure. My arm gets

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sore from controlling the hydraulic lever that operates the augers because I have to move it forward and backward all the time. We traded it for a new **Knight** 8024 spreader which we like."

Erling Swiggum, Dodgeville, Wis.: "My best buy is my **Case-IH** 8309 discbine. It mows fast and will cut through grass, animal mounds, and even pen manure. There's a lot less downtime than with a sickle mower."

Lloyd Bohl, Grant Park, Ill.: Lloyd says his 1996 **Deere** 8100 with MFWD has a long way to go before it'll compare to the 1994 **Deere** 7800 with powershift transmission he traded for it.

"The transmission on the 8100 hesitates between gears. It shifts jerky. The 7800 had more power. The dealer has worked on it but it still doesn't perform as well as the 7800. It seems doggy on top end pulling."

Harry M. Gandy, Athens, La.: "This is one of the best tractors I've ever owned," says Harry about his 1997 **Massey Ferguson** 383. "The only improvement that could be made is to increase the hydraulic speed."

Larry Otta, McCallsburg, Iowa: "It has a lot of power and starts right up in cold weather," says Larry about his 1996 **Ford** F-350 crew cab 4-WD pickup equipped with a Power Stroke engine and automatic transmission. "It rides good for a 1-ton pickup. Fuel economy is okay."

Tom Stenberg, Volga, S. Dak.: Tom's the owner of a "best buy" 1968 **Case** 770 diesel. "It's needed very few repairs, is fuel efficient, easy to service and is just the right size for mowing, raking, and baling hay as well as hauling manure," he says. "I also have a **Case-IH** 5130 tractor that I use for loader work. The shuttle shift on the steering column is very handy but I have only 3,600 hours on it and already have had to replace the front wheel seals."

Franklin A. Robinson, Benedict, Md.: "This tractor is used nearly every day, along with five other tractors," says Franklin about his 1994 **Belarus** 925 4-WD equipped with cab and air conditioning. "It's developed several minor oil leaks and seeps, so seals could have been improved. The best thing about it is that the price was less than half that of a Deere or Case-IH."

James Wilbert, Romulus, N.Y.: "I planted 140 acres of crops with my 1968 **David Brown** 1200 tractor. It performed well and is fuel efficient.

"My 1990 **Dodge** D150 pickup equipped with a 318 cu. in. engine and automatic transmission runs well. I use it to pull an 18-ft. trailer. No problems."