

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

Randomly selected farmers “tell it like it is” in nominating their “best” and “worst” buys.

By: Mark Newhall
Editor

Bill Gergen
Senior Editor

Farmers Nominate Best, Worst Buys

OPINION

Tell Us About Your “Best or Worst” Buy
Send your nominations to:
**FARM SHOW, P.O. Box 1029,
Lakeville, Minn. 55044, or use
the survey form on our website at
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Lewis Legge, Valley City, N. Dak.: “My 1995 **Wood Mizer** is one of the best pieces of equipment I’ve ever seen. It does what it says it will and never breaks down. I do about 15,000 board feet a year as a sideline. On a good day, I can saw up to 1,000 board feet.

“The tensioning system is simpler and easier than competitive saws, and it is quick and easy to set up. I can pull into a yard and be sawing wood 15 minutes later. I can fold up and leave even faster, in five minutes or less.”

Legge says the **Wood Mizer** has helped make possible several sideline businesses in addition to custom sawing.

“I saw primarily cottonwood for windbreak fence, trailer deck and for mini-storage buildings I set up and rent out. I also saw up ash trees and market to local woodworkers. I quarter saw it, and it makes wonderful furniture.

“Milling is a customer-driven business. You have to give them what they want with some exceptions. One is cottonwood. It has a very bad name, only because mills cut it up for people who take it home and nail it up. You have to cure it first. I won’t even give them green wood. I educate my customers

used it a lot on our farm and for hunting. In heavy brush it’ll go anywhere a regular ATV can go. It’ll also easily outclimb a 4-wheeler. The new machine now has about 5,500 trouble-free miles on it and has never let us down. Over the years we’ve had good luck with **Polaris ATV’s**, too. We bought our first one in 1989.”

Allen Condon, Chesapeake, Va.: “It has more than 247,000 miles on it but is still going strong,” reports Allen about his 1994 **Dodge 2500** diesel pickup. “The transmission was overhauled at about 150,000 miles. I use it to haul my antique tractors to shows.

“My **Maytag** refrigerator equipped with a bottom freezer is my worst buy. I bought it at **Lowes**. The first unit lasted only three days and was replaced. The second unit had forklift marks on top from the factory and lasted only 13 months. The company sent us a new compressor, but we had to pay for the \$150 labor charge to install it.”

Daniel Rioux, Layton, Utah: “I’m well pleased with my 1998 **Ford F-150** pickup. It has more than 130,000 miles on it but just keeps going strong.

“My **Ryobi** 4-cycle weedeater is my worst buy. It has been a piece of junk since the day I bought it. After only two months of light use it started leaking oil, and the company wouldn’t do anything about it. I’ve had it rebuilt twice but the same problem keeps happening.”

Jack Kovars, Mountainburg, Ark.: “My 1992 **White Field Boss 37** tractor equipped with a front-end loader is my best buy. I bought it used 11 years ago. This tractor has a 4-cyl. **Isuzu** diesel engine, an 18-speed transmission with a creeper gear, and a fully synchronized main gearbox. The engine runs quiet and is fuel efficient.

“We’ve used this tractor to clear five wooded acres, to erect a 30 by 40-ft. metal shop, to build roads, and to help build a new home. It has required only routine maintenance. I recently mounted a **Bush Hog 750** backhoe on it which I’ve used to dig many tree stumps, and so far the tractor handles it well. I wouldn’t trade it for any other tractor.”

Wayne Heiserman, Bloomfield, Iowa: “My 1990 **Dodge Dakota 4-WD** pickup has more than 195,000 miles on it and is my best buy. It has a V-6 engine that doesn’t use any oil and gets 22 mpg. This is the fourth **Dodge** pickup I’ve owned since 1973, and I’ve put more than 100,000 trouble-free miles on all of them.

“My 1995 **Troy-Bilt** 5 hp rototiller is a best buy. It’ll grind up just about anything in my 5,000 sq. ft. garden. All it has ever needed was a new belt.”

Kyle Sodoma, Bayboro, N.C.: “My 1997 and 2001 **Dodge Ram 1500** pickups were both best buys, but my 2001 **Dodge Ram 1500** equipped with a Hemi is an even better vehicle. It accelerates like a race car, rides like a Rolls Royce, and gets about 20 mpg. I absolutely love it.”

Mike Miller, Spencer, Neb.: “My 1994 **Subaru 4-WD** mini truck that I use like an ATV is both my best buy and my worst buy. This truck is very versatile with a short turning radius, the ability to haul heavy loads, and a good heater. I installed bigger wheels and tires on it to soften the ride. The downside is that the importer gave me an air filter that didn’t properly fit, and as a result the engine got ruined with only 3,000 miles on the vehicle. In less than one year, the importer’s used engines went up in price from \$550 for a transaxle/engine assembly to \$800 for just the engine. A local dealer of this importer said that ‘no American-made air filters fit these trucks’, contrary to what the importer said, and that he had heard of several incidences just like mine.

“I hope someone will start a class action

on how to use the stuff.

“Most of my wood comes from tree trimmers and guys in town who cut down a tree. It makes me feel good to use up trees that would otherwise be burned.”

Robert Horne, Rural Retreat, Va.: “My worst buy is a steel building kit manufactured by **Powerbuilt Steel Buildings** and sold by **American Steel Span**. The kit consists of overlapping metal arches that bolt together. The supplier recommended a contractor, who suggested I have the county inspectors waive the progress inspections which I was able to do because it was a farm building. Followup investigations revealed the man was a Class C contractor doing Class A work. As work progressed, the building was leaning severely. He abandoned the project without waiting for his final 25 percent fee. I had to hire another contractor but the building still leans and required internal supports. It also leaks in several places. The original contractor was arrested and paid a fine. My advice: Don’t bypass the building inspectors.”

Ron Gardner, Grand Valley, Ontario: “My 1988 **Deere AMT 600** utility vehicle is my best buy. It’s almost 20 years old but still works good for hauling deer, moose and firewood.

Roger Kahler, Kahler Kustom Iron, Dunnell, Minn.: “My best buy is my **Unihydro 42-ton** metal worker (www.unihydro.com). I bought it to replace another 35-ton **Unihydro** metal worker that was lost in a fire. I’ve used **Unihydro** products for more than 20 years and really like them. They’re built with quality and come with a vertical no-distortion shearing plate.”

Brian Casorso, Kelowna, B.C.: “I like my 2004 **Polaris Sportsman 6-WD** utility vehicle. I bought it to replace a 1994 **Polaris Big Boss 6-WD** model. We put about 13,000 miles on the **Big Boss** with no problems and