

Farmers Nominate Best & Worst Buys

tractor has 1,500 hours on it with no problems.

"The engine on my **Deere 4020** tractor has about 9,000 hours on it but has never been overhauled. It's a great loader tractor.

"My **Isuzu Lil Pup** pickup is tough as nails. It has 150,000 miles on it but has required no major repairs."

Lorne J. Ulven, Strongfield, Sask.: Lorne's impressed with his 1990 **Deere 8960** 4-WD tractor equipped with a Cummins diesel engine. It replaced a **Deere 8850** 4-WD model which was equipped with a V-8 engine. "I like the combination of Deere reliability and Cummins diesel power. I don't have to worry about huge repair bills as might be expected with the V-8 engine.

"My worst buy is my 2000 **Ford Taurus**. After a factory recall to change the computer settings, the fuel efficiency went way down, from 35 mpg to 25 mpg. The company said they couldn't do anything about it. Also, dust collected between the door seals and blew into the car every time the doors were opened."

Lynnae Rasmussen, Newfolden, Minn.: Lynnae's the proud owner of a 2001 **Snapper Grounds Cruiser** ATV tractor equipped with a 9 1/2 hp engine and a cargo box. "My husband bought it as a surprise gift for my



birthday. It's a real work horse. I'm a gardener of sorts. We have 80 acres so I have plenty of room to drive my 'cruiser'. It has a hitch for pulling wagons or trailers as well as a hydraulic dump hoist for moving dirt, plants, hay, rocks, etc. We use it everywhere in our yard. It's easy to start, shift and drive. It can be locked into 4-WD if we should ever get stuck. It will idle for any length of time. Top speed is 20 mph."

Rell Gamblin, Llano, Texas: Rell owns two 1996 **Honda Foreman** 4-WD ATV's. "I've replaced the battery on each one. That's it. These machines just keep on going."

Marlin Oberholtzer, Ephrata, Penn.: "My **White 5100** corn planter is my best buy. It has few moving parts and great seed spacing and depth control. I recommend this planter to all my Deere friends."

Robert Blankenship, Glendive, Mont.: Robert says his "best buy ever" is his 1968 **Deere 2510** tractor. "We can depend on this tractor no matter what the conditions. It starts right up even at temperatures down to 40 degrees below zero. One time we even used it as a hoist for a crippled cow. It's easy to work on and is ready when we need it."

Walter Rauch, Knox City, Texas: "Without a doubt it's the most economical pickup I've ever owned," says Walter, pleased with his 1992 **Dodge 250** 3/4-ton pickup equipped with a Cummins diesel engine and extended cab. "It has about 290,000 miles on it but the engine, transmission, and rear end have never been touched. It still has the original starter."

Robert Koeppe, New Effington, S. Dak.: Robert likes his 2002 **Maurer** 34-ft. grain trailer which he pulls behind his semi tractor.

"It's attractive and well-built with plenty of hopper clearance and a high quality paint job. My only wish is that the landing legs were placed farther back on the trailer, which would allow more clearance for the semi tractor's mud flaps when turning."

Roy A. Ihminen, Hurley, Wis.: "My 1941 **Ford-Ferguson** tractor is my best buy of all time. I'm the second owner. The engine has had one exhaust valve replaced - that's it. The oil pan has never been off. I use STP oil additive which I think is one reason why it uses very little oil, even in hot weather. I'm 80 years old. This is my third tractor in all that time, and it's the best."

Charles Cook, McComb, Miss.: Charles has had problems with a trickle battery charger that he bought from **Harbor Freight Tools**. "The battery charger quit charging after the first time I used it. It cost more to return it to the company than it was worth.

"I bought a magnetic engine block heater from the same company and it's also a worst buy. The block heater never was able to keep the engine block even barely warm."

Frank Foard, Hydes, Md.: "My 2000 **Deere 335** all-hydraulic riding mower is my best buy. It's easy to operate and is the most perfect mower I've ever operated. I use it to mow six acres every week. After I bought it I parked my **Cub Cadet** in the garage and it's still sitting there."

Timothy McCarthy, Glade Valley, N.C.: "I'm totally satisfied with my **Deere Gator** 6 by 4 utility vehicle. I use it every day around my farm to do everything from feeding to checking cows and fences. It can haul up to 800 lbs and handle any kind of terrain. It's easy on fuel. I had a problem with the carburetor when it was new, but the dealer promptly repaired it under warranty."

John Porter, Albion, Mich.: "I've had great luck with my trusty 1974 **Cushman** truckster utility vehicle. It dumps hydraulically and has a 2-speed rear end. Lot's of power and good road speed. I don't know what I'd do without it. I call it my Buggy, and whenever my dog hears that word she runs and jumps on it."

Eric Wallis, Rudyard, Mich.: Eric's happy with his three **Oliver** tractors - a 1959 880 model, 1964 550 model, and 1974 1755 model. "The 880 has more than 8,000 hours on it, the 550 more than 6,000 hours, and the 1755 almost 5,000 hours. They've all been dependable tractors and have required very few repairs - just routine maintenance. It's tough to justify a new \$60,000 tractor when I already have three dependable tractors in which I have a total investment of less than \$18,000, including repairs."

Ronald N. Miller, Bonner Springs, Kansas: Ronald nominates his 2002 **Durabilt** 10-wheel hay rake as his "best buy". "In the past I've always used a side delivery rake. But now I can do a job that would normally take a side delivery rake six hours, in only about two hours. If I only need eight wheels, I can swivel the two front wheels up out of the way. Eight wheels will cover two passes made by a 9-ft. haybine."

Richard Jagels, Buhl, Idaho: Richard likes **Roughneck** furrow irrigation gated pipe gates from **Geist, Inc.**, Lincoln, Neb. "They don't leak because each gate is held by a plastic screw, allowing me to tighten the two halves together as much as I need. They're less expensive than original factory gates."

Jason Bruck, Clinton, Mo.: "My **Nokia** digital phone is my best buy. It allows my

1878 Planter Still Ready To Go

If he needed to, Neil Holcomb could still plant corn with his 1878 Barlow check row corn planter. His father used it before him, as did his grandfather, great grandfather, and great, great grandfather, who bought it brand new. Although the planter hasn't actually been used since the 1930's, all parts are in place, and it's ready to go.

The largely wooden planter nearly went under the ax in the 1930's when a more "modern" planter replaced it. Holcomb's father decided to save it and in the 1960's helped his son repaint the planter to its original colors. The only thing that had to be replaced was the wooden jump seat that had been destroyed by mice seeking the salt left behind by sweating bottoms.

"Everything else was there, including the covers to the boxes and different plates for different size seed," says Holcomb, of Eleva, Wis.

The planter was pretty advanced in its day. One foot pedal controls the lift mechanism, engaging wheel gear cogs that raise the planter as it reaches the end of the field. A second foot pedal controls a scraper plate to clean the press wheels and prevent dirt buildup. Thick glass windows on each side of the seed boxes allowed the operator to



This 1878 check row planter has been in the Holcomb family for five generations.

watch the kernels drop.

Other innovations for the day included a wooden marker that rode beneath the driver and laid out a track to follow. The driver would flip it from one side to the other at the end of the field. Concave press wheels ensured good seed-to-soil contact and alternative trip mechanisms gave options for check row planting.

"It was advertised as the best check row corn planter of its time," notes Holcomb.

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customers to reach me any time. Cingular's nationwide service has been outstanding. If my phone has to be repaired the company always provides me with a loaner phone. They really provide good service."

The Sinclairs, Parsons, W. Va.: "We like our 1980 **International Harvester** **Cub Cadet** tractor, which we bought used. It has 20 hp to hp and runs great.

"Our 1995 **Murray** 18 hp garden tractor runs great. No complaints."

Mountain View Dairy, Stuarts Draft, Va.: A 2000 **New Holland** FP 230 forage harvester rates as their "best buy". "We chop a lot of hay and corn. Whenever the hay was heavy or a little tough, our old chopper would plug up repeatedly. This machine, on the other hand, gobbles up any crop it gets its hands on as long as you have enough horsepower. It's equipped with a built-in kernel processor. Changing headers on it is a snap. The company has a good thing going here."

David Albright, Meridian, Okla.: "My 2000 **New Holland** TN 755 tractor runs great. It has a great heater and air conditioner and I really like the Super Steer feature. On the negative side, it's hard to get parts for it. Also, one time the gas tank fell out and the company refused to pay the transportation fee to have the tractor delivered to the dealer for repairs."

Roger D. Russell, Savannah, Tenn.: "Our worst buy is a **General Electric** 14.8 cu. ft. chest-type freezer. "Two months after I bought the unit it had to be charged with freon. Six months later it was again low on freon. The repairman said the problem was due to a leak inside the freezer case so I requested that the freezer be replaced but the company refused. Instead, they had a repairman bypass the evaporator coil inside the freezer and mount a new evaporator coil outside the freezer case. I informed the company that I wouldn't accept this unsightly repair, but it didn't do any good."

Charles W. McDonald, Inwood, W. Va.: "I like my **Case** 0580 K loader and backhoe. It has never been back to the dealer and hasn't

needed any major repairs.

"My 1999 **Mercury** Grand Marquis is my worst buy. It burned a lot of oil from the day I bought it. I was told this problem would get better once the engine got some miles on it. Later, the dealer told me this engine is supposed to use about one quart of oil every 900 miles. However, when I got rid of the car at 22,000 miles it was using three quarts of oil about every 1,000 miles. I paid \$30,000 for this car and traded it after I had used it for only 26 months. The trade-in value was only \$8,500."

"When I got rid of the car at 22,000 miles, it was using three quarts of oil every 1,000 miles."

Lisa Martin, Bainbridge, Penn.: Lisa bought a \$2,000 **Compaq** laptop computer from Circuit City and says it's her "worst buy". "The company doesn't stand behind its products. I've had continuous problems with it from the start. It was sent back twice for repairs, and I've had to spend countless hours on the phone. However, neither Circuit City nor Compaq will do anything about the problem. They keep telling me to send it back through the mail so it can be repaired under warranty. But when I call in they can't even find my computer's model number in their database."

Keith Wyatt, Ranger, Ga.: Keith's impressed with his 1996 **Dodge** Ram 2500 4-WD pickup. "It has more than 134,000 miles on it but still runs like new. The only repair it needed was for a fuel line problem.

"My 2000 **AGCO** Allis Chalmers tractor is my worst buy. Something always seems to go wrong with it, whether it's something big like the 3-pt. lift or a smaller thing like the

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