

Best & Worst Buys

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pressure which caused the loader to work slow and it had a poor clutch. Despite all these problems it still had good trade-in value."

Will Hathaway, Turin, Iowa: Will's impressed with his 1996 4 by 2 **Deere Gator**. "The 3 by 4-ft. box is handy and dumps out. We've had it rounded up full of dirt. It has only a small 10 hp engine but it seems to have plenty of power and is easy on fuel. We use it every day."

Willard Pinckard, Wray, Colo.: "I had a 1992 **Case-IH 4-WD 9230** row crop tractor equipped with a 235 hp engine. I liked it so much I traded it for another one just like it - a 1996 9330. I haven't used it much yet but I'm sure it'll work just as well."

David DeMarcus, Lexington, Kent.: David's the owner of a "best buy" 1978 **Deere 4430** turbocharged 125 hp tractor. "I bought it used with 2,200 hours. It has done everything we've asked it to do. We use it to cut, rake, bale, haul, and feed hay. We also use it to subsoil, plow, and disk. One time we hooked 10 wagons together behind it that we used to haul round bales. Each wagon had eight bales on it weighing 1,800 lbs. apiece. We stacked the bales double wide and put two on top to hold them on. It totaled up to 72 tons of hay which the tractor was able to pull with no problems, even though two tires on the wagons blew out. It just kept on pulling."

Don Calhoun, Stockton, Ill.: Don likes his **White 6124** tractor which is equipped with a **Westendorf** loader. "I really like the tractor's **Quadrashift** transmission."

Lloyd Lehman, Dalton, Ohio: A **Stihl** Weedeater string trimmer that he bought in 1984 rates as Lloyd's "best buy". "I use it to mow under electric fences and around farm buildings. I had to replace the head once. I'm well satisfied with it."

Walter Schweitzer, Ledger, Mont.: Walter's impressed with his 1993 **MacDon 7000** swather. "The company was eager to introduce it to our area so they offered us a good price. We've used it every year to cut 2,000 acres of heavy, irrigated hay without any problems besides normal wear and tear. It conditions hay quicker than other swathers that we've seen."

"My 1990 **Ford F-150 XLT Lariat** pickup is my worst buy. The clutch slave cylinder wore out and unfortunately it wasn't covered by the warranty. The rear anti-lock brakes were constantly in for repairs, and the alternator failed and cost \$700 to replace. All of these problems happened within the first 30,000 miles. We were happy when our hired man totaled this lemon out so that we could buy a Chevrolet."

Gary D. Biester, Clay Center, Neb.: Gary purchased his "best buy" 60 by 120-ft. machine shed from **Morton** in 1994. "I was really impressed with the quality of materials and the professionalism of the crew that built it."

On the negative side, "My 1992 **Gleaner R52** combine was the worst piece of equipment I ever owned. Everything that could go wrong with it did go wrong. We traded it in for a **Deere 9400** which we really like."

Monte Williams, Newburgh, Ind.: Monte likes the **Soilmover 700** 7-yard scraper equipped with a dirt pan and dolly that he rented. "I used my **Case 1370** tractor to pull it and was able to move 35 to 40

yards of dirt per hour. I never had to stop - I was able to load, dump, and level on-the-go. It's a one-man operation."

Eugene Herrmann, North East, Penn.: Eugene's "best buy" is his 1995 **King Cutter 6-ft.** finish mower. "It has a unique cantilever action that keeps it from scalping even when the tractor is on uneven ground."

Scott Snider, Cainsville, Mo.: Scott's 1995 **Agco Allis 6690** front wheel assist tractor equipped with a 780 front-end loader and grapple fork heads his "best buy" list. "It has a lot of power and the loader makes it easy to handle logs and round bales. The front wheel assist allows it to pull loads that would normally have to be pulled by a higher horsepower tractor."

"My 1991 **Ford 5610** tractor is a best buy. I use it every day. No problems."

On the "worst buy" side, he's unhappy with his 1993 **Big Valley** loading chute. "The endgate is hard to operate if it's slightly off-level, even with proper lubrication. Also, the paint on it has begun to flake and it's showing rust."

Gary Branum, New Madrid, Mo.: A 1994 **Deere 6400** "mudder" tractor rates as Gary's "best buy". "It's an amazing tractor. Everything on it is easy to service. A lot of common sense went into its design. The hydraulics work well for ditching and working in rice fields."

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Dale Oldenberg, Medford, Wis.: "It does an accurate job of planting in a minimum amount of time," says Dale, pleased with his **Deere 7000 4-row** corn planter. "It's also very reliable."

"My **Briggs & Stratton 18 hp** twin cylinder engine is my worst buy. The starter gear is made out of plastic and breaks about every three months. The engine doesn't work well because it has a fixed jet carburetor. I drilled out the jet and added my own adjusting needle. Now it runs okay but only after I went through a lot of grief."

Dan Churchill, Quesnel, B.C.: "My **Honda** water pump is my best buy. I bought it in case we ever have a fire on our farm. Thankfully, I haven't had to use it yet. But it starts quick and produces a lot of pressure. We tested it during several fire drills. "My **Husqvarna** brush cutter and **Husqvarna** chain saw are both best buys. I've always found the Husky line of equipment to be powerful and dependable and easy to repair. Repairs are seldom necessary, though."

On the "worst buy" side, he's unhappy with his **Stihl 009** chain saw. "I used it last year to make firewood. We go through about 10 cords per year. The saw works okay but the air filtering system is terrible. It sucks in every piece of sawdust for miles around and packs it firmly around the carburetor. We have to use an air compressor to blow away the dust about every two hours. I wore out two **Homelite XL** chain saws and a **McCulloch** and never had this problem."

Mark Schmeltzer, Sherwood, Ore.: "It rides and drives great, has a lot of power, and gets 19 to 20 mpg," reports Mark, pleased with his 1992 **Ford F-350** extended cab pickup equipped with a 7.3-liter diesel engine and 5-speed transmission. "We had problems with the brakes at 128,000 miles. Otherwise it has required only routine maintenance. It now has 137,000 miles on it."

"Our **JCB 210SL** front-end loader is the handiest piece of equipment on our farm. It gets around fine in the mud and turns short. It also has a lot of lifting power."

"Our worst buy is my 1994 **Chevrolet 1/2-ton** extended cab pickup. We thought it would be a good vehicle for running to town for parts, but it gets only 10 mpg which means we spend a lot on fuel. It doesn't have a lot of power and the 4-WD seems to work only when we don't need it. I'll never buy another Chevrolet. I don't know why the company calls it a truck when it's not even a real pickup."

Myles C. Elsberry, Wausa, Neb.: Myles owns a "best buy" 1996 **Ford F-150 4-WD** extended cab, short box pickup equipped with a 352 cu. in. engine and 4-speed automatic overdrive transmission. It's his "best buy". "I tested a lot of other pickups before I bought it. Dodge tried to talk me into buying a Dakota in order to save on gas, but the difference between driving the Ford and Dodge models I tested is like the difference between driving a Cadillac and a Volkswagen. I also have a **Dodge Caravan**. It's a nice minivan but it has terrible road noise, especially compared to my Ford pickup. The pickup also rides better than the van."

Wayne L. Smith, Cardston, Alberta: "It does a great job of getting round bales off the field in a hurry," says Wayne about his 1992 **Morris 881** Hay Hiker hay hauler. "The only problem is that when it unloads it leaves my 1,600-lb. hard core bales touching each other which causes some spoilage."

"My 1990 **Sitrex 10-wheel, 3-pt.** hay rake is my worst buy. I bought it so that I could rake two windrows together before baling. However, it's the most poorly engineered piece of equipment I've ever owned. If someone had come along after I'd tried to use it for just a half day, I'd gladly have given it away to them. It slobbered hay all over the place on corners and in thick, heavy hay it plugged up and left big gobs of hay. I made a lot of different adjustments to it but nothing helped."

Jim Kaufman, Moundridge, Kan.: Jim's had good luck with his 1971 **Deere 5020** tractor. "It was relatively inexpensive and has been reliable, comfortable, and fairly fuel efficient. It has 10,000 hours on it and I think it'll last at least another 5,000 hours."

J.A. Currie, Niton Junction, Alberta: "My 1995 **GM Geo Metro 4-door** car is my best buy. It drives like a dream and is very fuel efficient at 50 mpg. It starts good and has front wheel drive so it handles well even on icy roads."

B. Bothman, Pearce, Ariz.: He's had problems with the **Packard-Bell 486** computer he bought from Damark, a mail order company. "The computer was built with used parts and was broken when we got it. At the time we thought it was a case of 'operator malfunction'. Both Damark and Packard Bell refused to take it back. We tried calling the company six to ten times a day but their toll-free phone number for assistance was always busy."

Richard Grossi, Inverness, Calif.: Richard's "worst buy" is spray-on **Freeze**

Brand for branding livestock. "We used it exactly as shown on the video that was provided, but the brand never showed up clearly. A company representative came out and re-branded the cows but we still can't see the brands. We're now using brass irons with good results."

Frank Dueck, Belize City, Central America: "My 1972 **Massey-Ferguson 135** tractor equipped with a 3-cyl. diesel engine has over 16,000 hours on it but still runs good. It's hard to believe any tractor could work any better. We use it with a 6-ft. rotary cutter in 5-ft. tall grass in temperatures up to 120 above zero. Even though the radiator partially plugged up with chaff the engine didn't overheat. Under such hot conditions water in the battery can evaporate so I slipped a 2-in. radiator hose elbow on it under the air cleaner pipe intake in order to suck up the engine fumes. That made it work even better. We use it for all our field work and other jobs like hauling gravel with a dump trailer that we made out of an old dump truck. The tractor weighs 4,000 lbs., the trailer 6,000 lbs., and the payload can be up to 15,000 lbs. yet the tractor still has no trouble pulling it. We've used it to round up cattle on our ranch, going full speed across levees and ditches. The operator almost gets thrown off the tractor but its low center of gravity keeps it from tipping over. Anyone looking for big power in a small package should consider this tractor."

"My **Massey-Ferguson 428** row crop cultivator is by far the best cultivator I've ever owned. It digs right through tall grass where other rigs I've seen just creep along and drag over the top of the grass."

"I'm well satisfied with my 1982 **Isuzu** car. It has 257,660 miles on it but the engine has never been overhauled. We drive it a lot on rough gravel roads. It rumbles a bit but otherwise is durable and economical to operate. One time five years ago a rubber hanger bearing went out on it, but here in Central America you can't always get parts so my daughter used clear silicone to build up the bearing cavity in layers. The silicone bearing is still there, but we have a new rubber one ready just in case it ever fails."

Calvin Fuller, Forest, Ontario: Calvin's impressed with his **Schwank** infrared tube heater. "We have two of them in our shop. One had some problems after only about six months. We called the area representative and within two days he brought out a brand new heater and installed it. That kind of service is what earns repeat business."

David R. Purkey, Mount Perry, Ohio: David's had good luck with **DeLaval** Vac troll automatic take-off milking machines.

"This kind of service is what earns repeat business."

"They require a minimum of maintenance which can be done by any farm worker. One operator can handle 12 units at a time. Very efficient."

Steve Hlinka, Wyoming, Ontario: "My 1994 **Ford 6640** tractor equipped with a powershift transmission is the handiest tractor I've ever used for doing small jobs like spreading fertilizer and cultivating. Mine doesn't have a cab. The steering wheel tilts up so I can stand while driving fast on a fairly rough field and push a button to shift whenever I turn."