

BUYING TIPS YOU CAN USE

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

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Jonas H. Schlabach, Millersburg, Ohio: “My New Holland 848 round baler was one of my best buys. I only paid \$2,100 for it at auction, and it works great. It’s lighter weight than many, which is important for me as I use it behind a power cart with horses.

“Where others make a soft core, the design of the 848 starts compressing the bale almost immediately. It makes a solid bale all the way through.

“We made one alteration that makes the bales even better. We replaced the bale tension springs with air shocks and put a gauge on them. If the pressure drops as hay conditions change, we stop and put more air in with a bicycle pump. It only takes a few minutes, and our bales are always solid and uniform.

“Another change I made was to add AGCO-type gathering wheels to the hay pickup. They really pack the hay in, which also helps with a uniform bale.

“I’m told the 848 is not popular, but that’s fine with me. I got a great baler for a low price, and with a couple improvements it works even better.”

Bradley Potter, Lowell, Mich.: “In the past, I’ve purchased Oregon blades for my



“The Quick Brush Sweet Corn Cleaner (cottagecraftworks.com) sweeps away corn silk without bruising the kernels. The soft brush is mounted in a wood stand with a side base designed for attaching to a table or counter with a C-clamp.

“Attach a 3/8-in. cordless drill to the rod that extends through one end of the wood stand, and you’re ready to go. I wrapped some wire around the trigger on the cordless drill, but you can use a hose clamp or other device to keep the drill running at medium speed.

“Once the brush was rotating, I ran the husked ear across it and watched the silks disappear.

“The brush with wooden stand was \$41.95. The brush alone is \$32.95.”

Harold Cox, Spokane, Wash.: “I’ve had problems with birds in my cherry trees and find Peregrine falcon decoys sold by Gempler’s to be an effective way to scare them off (www.gemplers.com; ph 800 382-8473). This decoy comes with a plug at the bottom for filling with sand or water, but I find it works best to remove the plug and mount the decoy on a 10-ft.

pvc pipe, which I lean up against a tree. Makes it easy to move the decoy every few days for better bird control. It also repels squirrels in nut trees. Sells on the website for \$15.49 plus S&H.

“I’ve also had problems with deer damaging our fruit trees. I heard about an organic fertilizer called Milorganite that’s supposed to repel deer when scattered on the ground. Milorganite is a sewage sludge product that’s been made by the city of Milwaukee since 1926. It’s sold as a hard pelleted fertilizer (www.milorganite.com).

“Scattering it on the ground didn’t work for me so I decided to turn it into a powder and spray it onto vegetation. I run the pellets through a flour grinder (not used for flour) and soak the powder for a couple days, stirring several times each day. I mix 3 cups of powdered Milorganite with 3 gal. of water, then strain the mixture through an old T-shirt held onto a bucket with a bungie cord. One spray-on application lasts about six months, and I make sure to avoid spraying on edible produce. It’s very effective.”

Stephen Charles, Seneca, S.C.: “My 2004 Dodge 2500 pickup has about 225,000 miles on it but is still going strong. Regular maintenance is the key. I just finished replacing the brake rotors and pads. This pickup still rides as good as new and, best of all, it’s paid for.”

Simon Oyier, Delphi, Ind.: “Our 1965 Ford 8000 tractor has about 10,000 hrs. on it but has required only routine maintenance. We use it 4 or 5 days a week all year long to grind feed and bale straw. It’s an exceptional tractor with minimal electronics and a reliable engine.”



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
www.FARMSHOW.com,
or E-mail your comments to:
Editor@FARMSHOW.com**

60-in. zero-turn riding mower from Agri Supply with good results. However, the blades I bought this year don’t cut as good. I measured both the old and new blades, and found that the lift on the back side of the new blades has been decreased by 1/4 in. As a result, the blades don’t create enough vacuum to do a clean mowing job. I went back to the dealer where I bought the mower and purchased blades from him that retain the needed lift. Now my mower cuts clean again.

“I use a trailer to haul a leaf vacuum powered by a Kohler engine. However, after a few years of use I had problems starting the engine and keeping it running, so I replaced it with a Predator 6 1/2 hp. gas engine from Harbor Freight. It starts and runs perfect.

“I’ve used Victor rat traps for years with good results, until recently when I bought one of their traps at Tractor Supply Company. I was surprised to find they’ve weakened the trap’s spring. As a result it won’t kill the rat, so it can drag the trap around. Also, the bait trip wire is so small that I have to straighten it out every time I reset it. I called the company to complain and they refunded my money.”

Karl Plank, Durbin, W. Va.: “It wasn’t cheap, but my 2013 walk-behind DR Field and Brush Mower equipped with a 18 1/2 hp. Kawasaki engine was money well spent. I’ve used this mower hard but it can take it. Their customer service is great. I accidentally ran into a tree stump hidden in the weeds and snapped the blade shaft. I called the company and explained what happened, and they sent me a new shaft at no charge even though the warranty had expired.”

Wendy Wellnitz, La Crescent, Minn.: “After nearly 40 years of processing sweet corn each summer, I’ve got a pretty good system in place, but I’ve never enjoyed removing the silk from corn. I tried a new tool this past summer, and it worked great.