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Goldman, Gates Bet Ethanol Boom Won't Repeat '80s-Style Bust

May 25 (Bloomberg) -- A quarter-mile procession of trucks piled high with corn trundles concussively over the ruts on Distillery Road in the farm town of Pekin, Illinois, 163 miles south of Chicago.

The 18-wheelers are about to drop their loads at Aventine Renewable Energy LLC, an ethanol maker that Morgan Stanley bought for \$66 million three years ago. Today, that investment is worth about \$750 million, according to a company filing, as runaway oil prices spur an ethanol boom.

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``There's a lot of investors clamoring to get into this space right now," says Robert Wilder, CEO of Encinitas, California-based WilderShares LLC, creator of the WilderHill Clean Energy Index of 40 publicly traded ethanol, solar power and fuel cell companies.

``It's created a bottleneck with who you invest in because it's not like there are 4,000 ethanol companies out there."