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Unusual ETFs That Investors Need

With over 1000 exchange-traded funds already being traded, and with 800 more currently in the registration process, the word "overkill" comes to mind - how many ETFs can we really use? In fact, some of the last few hundred to be introduced were borderline laughable because of their niche focus, including a fund hyper-focused on livestock and an exchange-traded fund that exclusively owned companies engaged in the creation of steel.

As it turns out, a few of these ETFs are having the last laugh. Their bizarre focus has turned out to be fruitful after all. Here's a look at three of these strange exchange-traded funds every investor should consider, and why.
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Not Just for Tree-Huggers Anymore
It wasn't all that long ago that green-friendly energy production was a great idea, but not fiscally fruitful. That's why the **PowerShares WilderHill Clean Energy Fund** (NYSE:PBW) and the more focused solar power play ….

…. Though the … Fund is only up 79% since its early 2009 lows, we're starting to see higher highs and higher lows again. The PowerShares WilderHill Clean Energy ETF has fared about the same, and is on the verge of punching through a key resistance level around $11.42.

Why do investors need the PowerShares WilderHill Clean Energy Fund and the … Solar ETF? The average P/E ratio for the holdings in the solar fund is 13.6, which wasn't trumped up by heavy subsidies. The average P/E for the WilderHill Clean Energy ETF is 12.7, which also isn't the mere result of heavy subsidies. These companies are actually profitable, and should become more so if crude prices remain high.
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The Bottom Line While Tuesday's marketwide implosion implies there's some risk in owning anything right now, all the trends driving the underlying forces mentioned above are bigger than just some emotionally-driven volatility for stocks; all of these are bigger trends that should last for quite some time. ….