

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

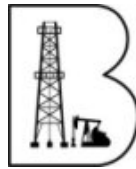
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 8-K

CURRENT REPORT

Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934

Date of Report (Date of earliest event reported): September 18, 2006 (September 18, 2006)



BERRY PETROLEUM COMPANY

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in its Charter)

DELAWARE
(State or Other Jurisdiction of
Incorporation or Organization)

1-9735
(Commission File Number)

77-0079387
(IRS Employer
Identification Number)

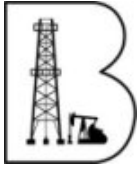
5201 TRUXTUN AVE., STE. 300, BAKERSFIELD, CA
(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

93309
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: **(661) 616-3900**

Check the appropriate box below if the Form 8-K filing is intended to simultaneously satisfy the filing obligation of the registrant under any of the following provisions:

- Written communications pursuant to Rule 425 under the Securities Act (17 CFR 230.425)
- Soliciting material pursuant to Rule 14a-12 under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14a-12)
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.14d-2(b))
- Pre-commencement communications pursuant to Rule 13e-4(c) under the Exchange Act (17 CFR 240.13e-4(c))



News Release

Berry Petroleum Company

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BERRY PETROLEUM RANKED 59 OF 100 FASTEST-GROWING COMPANIES BY FORTUNE MAGAZINE

Bakersfield, CA - September 18, 2006 - Berry Petroleum Company (NYSE:BRY), an independent oil and gas producer headquartered in Bakersfield, California, was recognized for the second consecutive year in *Fortune* magazine's list of "100 Fastest-Growing Companies" in the September 18 issue of the business magazine. In the special report on the 100 fastest-growing companies as calculated by *Fortune*, Berry ranked 59, based on various three-year measures.

Robert F. Heinemann, president and chief executive officer, said, "Our second appearance on this list in two years highlights the underlying growth strategy that Berry has been pursuing since 2003. Our move to 59 on the list from 97 last year indicates that our growth plan is working well. For this ranking by *Fortune*, Berry's three-year annual compounded results show earnings growth of 65%, revenue growth of 45%, and a total return of 57%. We expect to achieve our fourth consecutive year of double-digit oil and gas production growth in 2006."

About Berry Petroleum Company.

Berry Petroleum Company is a publicly traded independent oil and gas production and exploitation company with its headquarters in Bakersfield, California and a regional office in Denver, Colorado.

Safe harbor under the "Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995"

Any statements in this news release that are not historical facts are forward-looking statements that involve risks and uncertainties. Words such as "expect," and forms of those words and others indicate forward-looking statements. Important factors which could affect actual results are discussed in *PART 1, Item 1A. Risk Factors* of Berry's 2005 Form 10-K filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, under the heading "Other Factors Affecting the Company's Business and Financial Results" in the section titled "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" as updated in *PART II, Item 1A. Risk Factors* of Berry's June 30, 2006 Form 10-Q filed on August 9, 2006.

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